ZOLTAN VARGA, FAN YI YONG & FERENC PAZSI
BRING HUNGARY VICTORY AT NORTH AMERICAN TEAMS

On the Cover: Zoltan Varga
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Ma Lin
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Peter Karlsson
European Champion

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5 times US Champion

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ON THE COVER: Hungary’s Zoltan Varga ©2000 By John Oros

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NEW USATT MEMBERSHIP RATES
By Tong Lee, USATT Treasurer

USATT membership fees have remained unchanged since July 1, 1994. During the past 6-1/2 years, all of us have experienced numerous increases that affect us in our daily lives—gasoline, utilities, postage, automobiles, entertainment, and other necessities or amenities of life. The costs to service the USATT membership have also increased. USATT headquarters’ expenses alone have far exceeded all the fees collected from membership dues and services. This amount does not include costs to produce the magazine. Clearly, funds from other sources such as USSTTA Foundation grants and sponsorships are subsidizing membership services. In order to maintain and fund the quality programs and benefits enjoyed by the membership, the Board of Directors has approved rate increases effective February 15, 2001. Two new categories—3-year club memberships and 3-year memberships for juniors Under 15—are now available also.

The New Membership Fees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Membership Type</th>
<th>New Rate</th>
<th>Current Fees That Remain Unchanged</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>$30.00</td>
<td>$30.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>$75.00</td>
<td>$75.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family, 1 year</td>
<td>$50.00</td>
<td>$50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Club, 1 year</td>
<td>$30.00</td>
<td>$30.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Club, 3 years</td>
<td>$75.00</td>
<td>$75.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tournament Passes</td>
<td>$7.00</td>
<td>$7.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juniors U-18, 1 year</td>
<td>$20.00</td>
<td>$20.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juniors U-15, 3 years</td>
<td>$55.00</td>
<td>$55.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reasons for Increase

1. The annual headquarters expenses have increased steadily over the last few years and are now over $300,000. Revenues from membership dues, ratings fees and other fees total less than $200,000. Clearly, if we want to run the Association like a viable business, we must increase fees.
2. Nearly three years ago, USATT upgraded the quality of the magazine, but the cost of producing a glossy 64- to 72-page magazine with multiple color pages has increased several fold compared to the former tabloid magazine. The net cost of the magazine as a membership benefit is over $60,000 per year.
3. First-class postage used for many types of routine mailings has increased from 29 to 33 cents and will increase to 34 cents next year. Bulk mail postage for the magazine has increased by an even greater percentage.
4. The stipends of official and volunteers at the U.S. Open, Nationals, and other USATT events have increased.
5. Airfares for Board members, athletes and officials are significantly higher than they were several years ago.

The proposed increases are only the second in over 16 years. Even with the new rates, USATT’s membership fees still are on the low side compared to those of other national governing bodies (NGBs). The adult membership fees for some NGBs are as follows: Archery, $32; badminton, $25; canoe/kayak, $30; cycling, $45; fencing, $40; tennis, $25; water polo, $35; ice hockey, $25; judo, $36; and triathlon, $25. Many of these NGBs enjoy economies of scale as they have many more members than USATT. Except perhaps for tennis that boasts over 500,000 members, none have as good a magazine as ours, if at all. Some NGBs do not offer liability insurance, or charge extra for it. Badminton, for example, charges $40 for a club membership, and $40 for optional club liability insurance.

The effective date of February 15 provides sufficient notice and an opportunity for members to renew at current rates. Many of those participating at the U.S. Nationals would have renewed their memberships at current rates. We hope that all members will support these new rates and pledge to renew their memberships prior to their expiration. By doing so, they will help the Association reduce expenses in sending out renewal notices, and minimize lost revenue.

CORRECTIONS

On page 26 of the same issue, the photo of Matthew Murad was off-centered due to a printing error. Here is the corrected photo.

In the last (Nov/Dec 2000) issue, the feature coverage of the women’s events at the Olympics (both international and USA) were by USA Women’s Coach Doru Gheorghe. He put a huge amount of time into this article, and he was correctly identified in the table of contents. However, the article itself (beginning page 40), was identified as being by USA Men’s Coach Dan Seemiller (who had written up the men’s events). So, below is the heading that should have been there, with apologies to Doru.

Women’s Events
By Doru Gheorghe, USA Women’s Coach

They Said It...
By Larry Hodges

“I feel like an observer at a Ping-Pong match.” —Admiral James Stockdale

“I think the bigger ball is a good idea in the long run, but right now it is difficult because we only had two weeks to train with the 40mm ball after the Olympics. Sometimes the bounce of the ball really surprises you. I think it is also a question of the quality of the balls, it has to be improved.” —Werner Schlager, Austria

“Give it a try—no one can do anything with or against this rubber.” —Wagidi Falicoff, on the table tennis newsgroup rec.sport.table-tennis, on hardened long pips.

San Jose, California — We’re at CityTeam Ministries, a privately funded addiction program and homeless shelter. The drama begins when [George W.] Bush walks into a room where two of the addiction program’s residents are playing table tennis while four others watch.

“I got a heckuva forehand,” Bush says as he shuffles in with his wife, Laura.

“One’s a stud,” says one of the men. “Not that good,” Bush jokes. The place erupts with laughter. “What’s happening here besides a hot Ping-Pong game?” Bush asks. He sits down between two of the men, on the arm of a sofa.

“We’re living for Christ here,” says Mark Meeuwissen, 27.

“That’s good,” Bush says.

From salon.com, Nov. 1, 2000
DEAR USATT MEMBERS, CLUB LEADERS AND COACHES,

I am inviting you to take part in a nationwide series of programs that USATT is helping to set up in clubs all over the U.S. The programs will be set up at a time, starting with Beginning Classes. The goal? To set up club programs that will attract new players and keep existing ones.

There are three programs being developed:

• Beginning Classes .............. to begin April 2001
• Junior Classes ............... to begin July 2001
• Club Leagues ................. to begin September 2001

The first goal is to set up 10-week beginning classes in clubs all over the U.S., starting the first week in April.

WHY A BEGINNING CLASS?

This is the ultimate “win-win” program. A Beginning Class Primer, which shows how to get students and how to teach the class, has been developed and is available upon request from USATT, and online at www.usatt.org/club_programs. It includes a sample Beginning Class Flyer, and a sample Press Release to send to newspaper calendar sections. (You might also want to contact USATT about getting a copy of the USATT’s Instructor’s Guide to Table Tennis, which shows how to teach the various techniques. It will be online at the club programs page by January.) The gist of the program is as follows.

Most clubs get occasional new players who come in, get killed by more experienced players (or are ignored by these experienced players, who don’t want to play beginners), and so never show up again. The new player can neither perform nor understand the basics of the game, and has no peers to play against. How do we solve this problem?

You get 15-20 potential new players together for a 10-week class, meeting once a week for 90 minutes. Each student pays $100. (You can vary the fee or any other aspect of this program, as you believe fit.) By the end of the 10 weeks, the new players have an understanding of the game, can perform the basics, and – most important – have their own peer group: the other members of the class.

Result? New club members and new USATT members. The new player wins, the club wins, and USA Table Tennis wins.

But these are not the biggest winners. The biggest winner is the coach/promoter who sets up and teaches the class. Remember those 20 students paying $100 for 10 weeks? That’s $10 each per night, or $200 per night. The coach may hire two assistant coaches to help out. The coach/promoter gets $130 (assuming 20 students), should the coach/promoter get paid this much? Definitely. Without him, there is no class. It is this huge financial incentive that make the idea of teaching these classes attractive to coaches and promoters all over the country.

Is this realistic? I’ve taught over 20 of these very same 10-week classes, and can verify that it is realistic. The key is getting those 15-20 new players. And that’s the primary purpose of the enclosed Beginning Class Primer. It explains how to get these new players.

WHAT WE NEED FROM YOU

The main job of USATT in these programs is creating and distributing the Beginning Class Primer, and promoting & catalyzing the creation of these programs in clubs all over the U.S. The rest is up to you.

We need you to help select a coach for the Beginning Classes, or do so yourself: find a playing facility to teach it in; and join with others all over the country who will be doing likewise. The Primer goes over the specifics of what you will need to do. (Note: although there will be junior classes later on, junior players can also be in these beginning classes.)

You can get a complete list of USATT Clubs and Coaches at www.usatt.org. I will be there every step of the way if you need assistance in any way. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Rather than have all these classes start up randomly, there is a specific timetable I am hoping you will support. The goal is to have Beginning Classes start all over the country the first week in April, 2001. This will give you several months to promote and fill up the classes.

The Primer is not a dictatorial set of rules. They are guidelines. If you feel you should make adjustments based on your own circumstances, by all means do so!

FUTURE PROGRAMS

The Beginning Classes are only the first of three nationwide programs we hope to set up. Later you will receive similar information about setting up a Junior Training Program, planned to start in July, 2001. Still later, you will receive a letter about setting up Club Leagues, planned to start in September, 2001.

This is the first time I am aware of where USA Table Tennis went out of its way to actually create table tennis programs in clubs all over the U.S. Until now, we are just about the only sport that doesn’t offer various programs for players; please support us in changing this. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Larry Hodges, USATT Club Program Director
149-D Watkins Mill Rd. • Gaithersburg, MD 20879
301-977-7318 • ttworld@erols.com

CHINA VERSUS THE WORLD?

Courtesy of the Chunglau Table Tennis Page at http://members.home.net/chunglau/TT/ttindex.htm

After China swept the table tennis events at the Olympics, people are saying that the current table-tennis scene is China against the World. Perhaps that will be actually put to test. The Beijing company who successfully staged the Sweden-China rematch is now planning an International Table Tennis Challenge series. The two teams will include one from China, and one representing the rest of the world, with eight players on each team. The World team would presumably have Waldner, Persson, Samsonov, Primorac, Karlsson, Saive, Schlager and Kim. China would have Kong, Liu Guoliang, Liu Guozheng, Wang, Ma and others. The matches will begin at the end of November this year, and finish in December of next year. There will be 16 matches, and each player will play twice. The match-ups will be determined by random drawings. Waldner has already agreed to participate.
President's Report
By Sheri Soderberg Pittman

Happy New Year!

As always, there is a lot of news to share in this issue's association primer series.

SANDY BALDWIN ELECTED NEW USOC PRESIDENT

The USOC Board of Directors elected Sandy Baldwin, 61, to the position of USOC president at its December Board meeting. She is the first female to serve in that position.

On the eve of her election, she surprised me by enthusiastically recounting how impressed she was as a spectator at the gold medal men's match in Sydney. She also was delighted to hear about our good relations with the Chinese Table Tennis Association. She has 20+ years of experience within the USOC. Insiders expect her to move quickly in clarifying the direction of the organization.

LI AI ELECTED OLYMPIC ATHLETE REPRESENTATIVE

Congratulations to Li Ai for being elected as USATT's Olympic Athlete Representative. Sean O'Neill was the opposite-gender candidate who received the highest number of votes. He will serve as the Alternate. Their terms begin January 1, 2001 through the end of 2004.

Congratulations, Li and Sean!

The election for National Player Representatives, male and female, are underway as of this issue.

TRIP TO CHINA: ENRON MILLENNIUM FRIENDSHIP TOUR

Officials of the Chinese Table Tennis Association (CTTA) were quintessential hosts during the recent coaches and youth tour of China. Mimi Bosika's daily diary gives a glimpse of the wonderful memories tour participants will forever cherish. USATT extends its deepest gratitude to Enron for their generous sponsorship, to the CTTA for their excellent care of our delegation, to the ITTF for participating in trip negotiations as well as for generously hosting our delegation at the World Cup, and to the delegation members for their good sportsmanship and excellent comportment during the trip.

The main purpose of the trip was to reinvigorate what had become a dormant relationship between the U.S. and Chinese table tennis associations. Teamed up, the two associations can realize synergistic benefits, especially in marketing and sponsorship opportunities as well as in the area of elite development. It is my intention to keep pressing for joint efforts between our two associations and to provide you with updates each magazine issue.

For more information on the trip, including the background history of how the tour came to fruition, please visit www.usatt.org. Mimi Bosika's diary of the trip is in this issue.

EXCELLENT OUTLOOK FOR ACHIEVEMENT OF 2000 MARKERS

Since the last issue of the magazine, USATT has marched forward in its effort to successfully meet our USOC markers. The successful completion of the Enron Millennium Friendship Tour of China in October achieved our third marker. In November, Nan Li's attainment of a world ranking, coupled with Michelle Do's February placement in the world rankings, secured satisfaction of our fourth marker. Basically USA Table Tennis just needs to complete components of our administrative markers in order satisfy markers number one and two. Completion of all four markers will result in a USOC bonus payment to us.

BOARD APPROVES USATT ELECTIONS IN FALL OF 2001

At the USATT Board of Directors meeting in November, the Board approved changes in our bylaws for USATT elections. The Board adopted, with some revisions, a proposal submitted by a special ad hoc committee chaired by Wendell Dillon. The newly adopted changes specify the procedure for transitioning the vote back to the general membership. Future elections will coincide with Olympic quadrenniums. The president, secretary and two at-large vice presidents will serve for a 4-year term. This election will normally take place just after the Summer Games. Another election for executive vice president, treasurer, and two at-large vice presidents will occur at the mid-point of those 4-year terms. The transition to that election schedule will consist of an election in the fall of 2001 and the mid-term elections to be held in the fall of 2002. The next election after that will occur in 2004. More detailed election information will be included in the next issue of the magazine.

2001 BUDGET AND INCREASED MEMBERSHIP FEES SET

The Board also approved the budget for USA Table Tennis for 2001. Further details of the 2001 budget will run in the next issue of the magazine.

Treasurer Tong Lee inserted an increased membership fee structure in the revenue assumptions for the 2001 budget. Notice of, and the rationale for, the membership fee increase appears elsewhere in this issue of the magazine.

NEW COMMITTEE STRUCTURE ADOPTED

The Board also approved new bylaw language to establish a number of specific standing committees. Those standing committees, as well as the appointed chairs, are:

- Disabled Athletes – Sharon Frant Brooks
- Elite Athletes & Elite Development – Dennis Taylor
- Finance/Audit – To Be Determined
- Finance/Budget – Tong Lee, Treasurer
- Grassroots/Collegiate – Hank McCoullum
- Grassroots/Adult (Clubs) – To Be Determined
- Grassroots/Seniors – Dave Sakai
- Grievance/Ethics & Disciplinary – Cindy Marcum (pending Board approval)
- Hall of Fame – Jimmy McClure
- Hardhat – Scott Gordon
- Nominating & Elections – Wendell Dillon
- Rules (Officials) – To Be Determined
- Tournaments – Wayne Johnson
- Women's Development – To Be Determined
The Board also approved several nominations to serve in “specific designation” assignments. I am optimistic that I will be able to nominate candidates to fill the vacant chairs during the U.S. Nationals. During that tournament, I will also work closely with the appointed chairs to determine each committee’s scope and goals for 2001.

On behalf of USA Table Tennis, I would like to extend deep gratitude to the many committee chairs and volunteers who have served our association with distinction in the past. Since I became president, I have never received any roster of committee members, despite making multiple requests for the information. With this new committee structure in place, I anticipate that USA Table Tennis will be able to post complete committee information in the next publication. Meanwhile, updates will be posted on our website on an as-available basis.

I would like to extend special recognition to Y.C. Lee, who, for several years, dedicated his attention to USA Table Tennis doing full-time volunteer service.

NITTAKU TO REMAIN USATT’S BALL SPONSOR

The Board voted to accept a bid forwarded by Paddle Palace on behalf of Nittaku. The contract will involve cash, balls (including balls for promotional purposes), and guaranteed spending of over $50,000.

USATT THANKS THE SAN DIEGO TABLE TENNIS ASSOCIATION

USA Table Tennis thanks the members of the San Diego Table Tennis Association for their gracious assistance in logistics and hospitality for our November Board meeting.

HEADQUARTERS PERSONNEL CHANGES

Ben Nisbet recently tendered his resignation as executive director as did staff member Megan Kulenberg. USA Table Tennis wishes them both success in their future endeavors. Ben has graciously offered his continued assistance during this transition period.

Tami Walker has already joined the staff as Megan’s successor. Tami’s primary responsibility will be to process ratings. The previous ratings coordinator, Fran Boardman, has been helping USATT with the processing backlog and has been training Tami in her job responsibilities. I am pleased to report that the backlog in processing ratings has been resolved. Please remember that tournament directors are allowed time after their tournaments to submit the results and then ratings are processed. A post-tournament lag of three to five weeks in the reporting of new ratings is the acceptable norm that we have established. The Board understands the importance our membership attaches to this service. Once we became aware of the backlog last summer, we worked closely with staff to ensure that the backlog would be eliminated.

Subject to input received during the U.S. Nationals, I will be proposing changes in the current staffing structure, subject to Board approval. The primary change will be an increased emphasis on correlating staff time with association priorities. Stronger marketing and sponsorship acquisition will be a hallmark of the proposal. Additional funding sources are required in order to pay for costs associated with aggressive grassroots and elite development programs.

I will spend some time in Colorado Springs in January to establish specific roles and responsibilities so that association matters continue to be dealt with expeditiously while the executive director’s position remains vacant. Treasurer Tong Lee will also spend some time at our national headquarters with Karie Wright, our previous part-time, now full-time, bookkeeper to ensure that budgetary matters are run in accordance with USATT guidelines. Veteran staff member Margaret Smith has assumed responsibility for office operations during the interim.

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL NORTH AMERICAN TEAMS TOURNAMENT

Congratulations to Richard Lee and to his capable staff for running an excellent Thanksgiving weekend tournament. The Board recently signed an agreement with Richard Lee for NATT to run the tournament through 2003.

Once again, on behalf of USA Table Tennis, I extend to you all Happy New Year wishes.
Dear Ben Nisbet and Sheri Pittman,

It has been quite some time since we came back from China, but I wanted to thank you both for the opportunity to go on that wonderful trip. It was a great success, not only for diplomatic purposes but also for the players. There were times when you heard us whine about things, but when I think about the trip, I remember only the times we all enjoyed.

The treatment from the Chinese association was simply amazing, and overwhelming at times. We would have been happy with just the little welcomes and hellos, but instead they went all out to make us feel special. I know that this trip took a lot of hard work on their part, as well as yours. So I want to give you a special thank you for all the hard work you put into making this work!

This trip was particularly special to me because, being in college, I no longer get as much table tennis action, and I felt my skills were deteriorating. But while there, I realized that after a little warming up, I can still play at a decent level, which has encouraged me to pursue table tennis more.

The trip seemed to get better and better with each stop. I remember Beijing for the beautiful sightseeing. But Tianjin ... words can’t describe it. I wish I could have seen what my face looked like when we saw the sign welcoming us, OR the kids on the street, OR the opera show, OR the little marching band, and all the warm welcomes we received. Shanghai was a beautiful city. I was happy with our table tennis routine there as well; that was where we had our best competitions and practice. And then watching the World Cup, in THOSE seats! It was just great. When I tell my friends about the trip, I try to involve emotions to let them see how I felt while I was there — but really, words can’t describe it! No matter how hard I try, this experience could be felt and understood only by the people who were there. I made new friends, got everyone to sing "WHO LET THE DOGS OUT" with me, and was able to visit a beautiful country. But most of all, I was able to redevelop my love for table tennis. Again, thank you for your time and effort in making this trip a success.

Sincerely,
Ashu Jain
Edison, NJ

---

Dear Editor,

It is with great regret that I have learned of the resignation of Y.C. Lee as USATT Tournament Committee and USATT Officials Committee Chair. Although I do not know the specific factors which influenced this resignation, I do know that we have lost a dedicated, competent and hard-working volunteer whose hours of work far exceeded a full-time job.

Y.C. Lee’s main objective during the years he has headed these important committees has been to continually improve the quality of our two major national events and to expand and improve our corps of national umpires and officials. The just completed 2000 U.S. Open/ITTF Pro Tour in Fort Lauderdale is a case in point: perhaps our best organized and best run national championships in decades in which every match in the ITTF Pro Tour and the semifinals and finals in every event in the Open were umpired by qualified officials.

It will be difficult, if not impossible, to replace this invaluable worker.

Sincerely,
Dick Evans
Hillsboro, WV

---

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13. UNDER 2000 RR $ 15.00 $ 150.00 $ 50.00 $ 25.00 SAT / 11:30 AM
14. UNDER 1875 RR $ 15.00 TROPHY TROPHY SAT / 5:30 PM
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16. UNDER 1625 RR $ 15.00 TROPHY SAT / 9 AM
17. UNDER 1500 RR $ 15.00 TROPHY SAT / 1:30 PM
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19. UNDER 1200 RR $ 15.00 TROPHY TROPHY SAT / 11:30 AM
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See USATT.ORG web site for application, or Steve Slaback: sslaback@columbus.rr.com

Thanks to Berndt Mann for sponsoring the Hard Bat events
Thanks to Steve Slaback for sponsoring the Open event
In Memoriam:
Chuck Gorcheck
1943-2000

Marked by the sudden passing of Chuck Gorcheck, October 2 was a day of mourning for the Western New York table tennis community. Playing with focused intensity, Chuck inspired all those around him with his passion and dedication to the game. Chuck was generous with both his time and talent with anyone expressing interest in improving their level of play. He was well regarded as a highly ranked tournament player, avidly participating in tournaments throughout New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Ontario, Canada. Chuck was also a great supporter and booster of youth table tennis.

His accomplishments include founding the area’s first full-time table tennis club in a Buffalo suburb in the early 1990’s later to become The Greater Buffalo Table Tennis Club. Chuck was recently certified by USATT as a certified State Coach. The GBTTC intends to hold an annual tournament in his honor beginning next year.

Chuck is survived by two teenage sons, Chuckie and Greg.
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• Former Head Coach for the Guangxi Province of China
• Chinese National Team, 1976-83
• U.S. #1 Player in 1990
• Former U.S. Senior and Men’s Doubles Champion
• USATT’s Developmental Coach of the Year, 1997
• Full-time coach

Coach Larry Hodges (Only if large enough turnout)
• Author of Table Tennis: Steps to Success
• Director/Manager/Coach at Resident Training Program for Table Tennis at Olympic Training Center, 1985-89
• Many-time U.S. Junior Team Coach
• Certified by USATT as a National Coach
• USATT Coaching Chairman, 1991-95
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USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE • January/February 2001
COLLEGIATE CHAMPIONSHIPS
By Richard Lee

Association of College Unions International (ACUI) and the National Collegiate Table Tennis Association (NCTTA) have teamed up this year to hold both their national championships at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland, March 30-April 1, 2001. JHU was chosen because of its central location and it is home to the two-time NCTTA defending champions. In the past, these two events had always been held separately.

"By combining them, it allows players to play both events without having to leave their institutions twice so everyone can concentrate on their studies as well!" said Helen Huang, president of NCTTA. "We look forward to expanding NCTTA to ACUI participants who are from areas of the country we have not reached."

Students may qualify for the ACUI National Championships by competing in the ACUI Regional Tournaments. Please contact Hank McCollum (hwml@psu.edu, 814-238-7962) for more information.

The NCTTA has over 50 member universities and colleges in its team competition leagues. Teams are required to compete with all other active teams in their division twice to be eligible for the NCTTA finals. Please contact Helen Huang (hjhuang@mit.edu) for more information.

THE TIMEOUT RULE AND ITS APPLICATION
By Azmy Ibrahim

ITTF Rules Liaison for USATT

Usually the USATT adopts all the rules of the ITTF. However, there is a difference between adopting a rule and implementing it. For example, the expedite rule is adopted by the USATT but we hardly ever observe two players who implement it without an umpire. The same goes with the point penalty rule. Players cannot enforce it on their own without an umpire. The role of the umpire is not limited to arbitrating the rules; it involves also getting the attention of the spectators about what is involved. In the U.S. we sometimes have medium-sized tournaments conducted without a sufficient number of umpires, or even none at all.

The implementation of the timeout rule involves the inclusion of several parties. It involves the players; in single matches a designated coach; in team matches a captain; and spectators. It also needs to be recorded and timed, and follow the decision of the party who asked for it. In a singles match, a designated coach cannot be changed in the middle of the match, and the players cannot receive advice from anyone except the designated coach. In the same manner, the player or the designated coach are the only ones who can ask for the timeout. In a team match, it is the player or the captain who may ask for a timeout.

Rules 3.4.4.2.3 and 3.4.4.2.4 (see box) give the umpire specific responsibilities and tasks: use of a white card to inform spectators, placing another card on the side of the table of player(s) who asked for it, when to start the timeout, and when and how to end it, etc., etc.

From the above analysis, one can understand why the timeout rule should be limited to umpired matches. After soliciting the opinions of other officials and associations, we find that many of them have reached the same conclusion that the rule cannot be enforced without the presence of an umpire, and if left to the players on their own, it could lead to conflicts and disagreements which would be difficult to solve, and may lead to a disruption of the continuity of play.

ITTF TIMEOUT RULES

3.4.4.2: A player or pair may claim one time-out period of up to one minute during a match.

3.4.4.2.1: In an individual event the request for a time-out may be made by the player or pair or by the designated adviser; in a team event it may be made by the player or pair or by the team captain.

3.4.4.2.2: The request for a time-out, which may be made only when the ball is out of play, shall be indicated by making a "T" sign with the hands.

3.4.4.2.3: On receiving a valid request for a time-out, the umpire shall suspend play and hold up a white card; a white marker shall then be placed on the court of the player or pair making the request.

3.4.4.2.4: The marker shall be removed and play resumed as soon as the player or pair making the request is ready to continue or at the end of 1 minute, whichever is sooner.
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A Few Years Ago, at the Seattle Special Olympics, Nine Contestants, All Physically or Mentally Disabled, Assembled at the Starting Line for the 100-Yard Dash. At the Gun, They All Started Out, Not Exactly in a Dash, but With a Relish to Run to the Finish and Win. All, That is, Except One Little Boy Who Stumbled on the Asphalot, Tumbled Over a Couple of Times, and Began to Cry. The Other Eight Heard the Boy Cry. They Slowed Down and Looked Back. Then They All Turned Around and Went Back. Every One of Them. One Girl with Down’s Syndrome Bent Down and Kissed Him and Said: “This Will Make It Better.” Then All Nine Linked Arms and Walked Together to the Finish Line. Everyone in the Stadium Stood, and the Cheering Went on for Several Minutes. People Who Were There Are Still Telling the Story. Why? Because Deep Down We Know This One Thing: What Matters in This Life is More Than Winning, It is Energy, Effort and Dedication to the Paralympics. It Was a Rewarding Human Experience. The Paralympics Represent the Work of Humanity at Its Finest. The Theme Was Reach for the Fire: the Fire in Your Heart, the Fire in Your Mind, and the Fire in Your Spirit.

Yes, While the Olympics Is a Triumph of the Highest Qualities of Sports, the Paralympics Represent the Work of Humanity at Its Finest. The Theme Was Reach for the Fire; the Fire in Your Heart, the Fire in Your Mind, and the Fire in Your Spirit.

Thousands of Athletes, Officials and Volunteers Gave Their Hearts, Energy, Effort and Dedication to the Paralympics. It Was a Rewarding Human Sight to See Athletes Literally Carrying Each Other to the Bathroom in the Airplane. The Stewardesses, Stewards and Passengers All Helped to Make Every Athlete Proud of Him/Herself.

Yes, the Fire in the Mind, Where Body and Matter Cannot Limit the Energy and Power of Achievements.

The Fire in Their Spirits Transcends Beyond All the Barriers Among Those Athletes. It Conquers Not Only Their Physical Limitations, But Also It Generates the Feeling of Oneness. Human Oneness Where the Differences of Race, Ethnicity, Class, Religion, Culture Background, and Gender All Melt Into an Ocean of Respect, Help, Cooperation, and Togetherness.

It is an Experience Which All People Should See and Share, Unfortunately Our Media Is Not That Concerned. Very Little, If Any, Coverage Is Taking Place. World Media in General Give an Inadequate Attention to the Paralympics. Table Tennis Was Highlighted All the Time. During the Parade of Athletes, at the Opening Ceremony, It Was the German Athletes Who Started Throwing Table Tennis Balls to the Crowd. The U.S. Contingency Was Led by a Table Tennis Player Carrying the American Flag on His Wheelchair. It Was None Other Than Mike Dempsey, a Table Tennis Champion All His Life. The Table Tennis Competition Itself was Among 239 Players, with 40 Separate Events. It Was Well Organized and Well Run. Three Venues Were Used, the Main One with 12 Tables. The Other Two Were for Practice. The Australian Volunteers Added an Extra Sparkle All Over the Place. You Can Hardly Open Your Mouth or Stand Wondering Where You Are, and Several of Them Will Cater to Your Needs. They Will Leave Their Desks and Literally Walk with You the Extra Mile to Find Your Way or Fulfill Your Request.

Forty International Officials Did Their Best to Run a Smooth Tournament. Many of the Umpires Were Actually International Referrees. It Was a Great Opportunity for Them to Practice Their Umpiring Rather Than Just Preach It. We All Learned How to Run the Electronic Scoreboard.

I Hope My Words Can Convey a Small Part of the Feelings I Have Toward That Emotional Experience.

Other News

The Following Racket Coverings Were No Longer Valid Starting 10-1-2000:

• Double Happiness PF4-652
• Meteor (No Other Mark)
• Sunflex Spikes
• TSP Spinpips

I Received a Letter Asking About a Situation When a Player Would Be Allowed to Deviate From Using a Correct Serve. The Rule States that an Umpire Can Allow Some Deviation in Service Where a Player Has a Physical Impairment Which May Hinder His Ability to Play a Correct Serve. The Player Has to Show the Umpire the Medical Report or Reason for the Disability. If the Player Did Not Prove His Condition to the Umpire in Advance, All Points Taken from Him Stand, Even If He Then Proves His Condition. Therefore, It is the Responsibility of the Player to Inform the Umpire in Advance of the Match.
The web site that I am profiling this month is NCTT.COM (www.nctt.com), the Pride of Northern California Table Tennis. NCTT.COM provides a wonderful service by bringing together the twelve table tennis clubs located in the Bay Area. This area has become possibly the hottest table tennis spot in the USA, and NCTT.COM is helping to keep it that way.

The web site was created and is maintained by Terry Young. Terry was born in Phnom Pheng, Cambodia and he received a BS in Computer Science from UC Davis. His home club is the Palo Alto Table Tennis Club where he trains twice a week.

This web site provides a home for all Northern California players. It does this by providing up-to-date information about table tennis clubs, players, and events. The layout of the site is well designed, making it easy to get an overview of the table tennis activity in the area. NCTT.COM provides valuable information, including lists of upcoming tournaments and results and photos from previous tournaments. The web site helps players track the local competition by providing lists of area USATT players (listed alphabetically or by name). NCTT.COM provides detailed information about area clubs, including their location, hours of operation, cost, and programs.

This site brings the clubs in the bay area together in the spirit of cooperation that will help table tennis grow. I hope many more areas in the USA will adopt this form of web site. Visit www.nctt.com today. ☞

USA'S NAN LI EARNS WORLD RANKING

By Debbie Doney

Nan Li of Colorado Springs, Colorado, participated in the Swedish Open, November 23-26, in Umea, Sweden. Li earned a world ranking of 255 by beating Nina Vakkila of Sweden, world #229.

"USATT is very excited about the fact that Nan Li received her first world ranking and at the same time, finished the job of achieving USATT's 2000 High Performance Marker #4 - achievement of a world ranking by two youth athletes," said Barney Reed, USATT Youth Committee Chairman. Olympic Team Member Michelle Do, of Milpitas, CA, was first to meet this marker in February at the World Championships in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

The Swedish Open Women's Qualifiers consisted of eight groups of four. Nan Li's group included Jennie Lindstrom (SWE, WR #204), Pia Finneemann (DEN, WR #203) and Nina Vakkila (SWE, WR #229). Li easily swept past Vakkila, beating her by the surprising scores of 21-0, 21-4, and 21-19. In her other two matches, Li fought hard to win every point but eventually lost to Lindstrom, 18-14, and Finneemann, 11-19.

Li teamed up with Tatiana Logatzkaya (BLR) in the Women's Doubles Pre-Qualification Knockout Round of 16 and beat a Swedish doubles team – Jennie Linstrom/Susanne Jansson – 21-14, 14-21, 21-3. In the doubles round that followed, Li and Tatiana's winning streak ended short when they lost to Japan's Miyuki Nishii and Yuka Nishii, 9-17. ☞
HORACE ROBERTS WINS TWO GOLDS AND A SILVER
By Tim Boggan

At the Huntsman World Senior Games, played Oct. 9-21 in St. George, Utah for “female and male athletes 50 and ‘Better,’” New York City’s seemingly ageless defensive star, Horace Roberts, certainly showed he was the better part of 50, for he won both the Singles and Doubles in the 60-64 event and came runner-up in over 50 Singles.

This year’s games attracted 5,500 participants, both domestic and foreign, in competitions as varied as Softball and Square Dancing. Robbie’s winning Doubles partner was a Bulgarian, and the fellow he lost to in the 50’s under the Expedite Rule was Herbert Neubauer of Switzerland who’d come second to Liang Ge Liang in the 50’s at the May Vancouver World Veterans Championships.

The Games’ competitive fireworks were preceded by an Opening Day Parade at Dixie State College’s Hansen Stadium with addresses by Utah Governor Michael Leavitt and St. George Mayor Daniel McArthur. Among the sport celebrities present were Bob Mathias and Joe Nemeth. Renowned among our own were Tournament Chair Shonie Aki and Referee Wendell Dillon.

USA TABLE TENNIS PLAYERS AND TEAM OF THE YEAR

By vote of the USATT Board of Directors, Team Leaders and Team Coaches, David Zhuang was named Male Player of the Year, Jun Gao Chang Female Player of the Year, and the 2000 USA Olympic Team the Team of the Year. The winners were submitted to the U.S. Olympic Committee for consideration for the USOC® Sportsman, Sportswoman and Sports Team of the Year. The vote totals were as follows:

- **Male Athlete of the Year**: David Zhuang, 6; Cheng Yinghua, 2; Khoa Nguyen, 1; Jim Butler, 1.
- **Female Player of the Year**: Jun Gao Chang, 7; Michelle Do, 2; Jasna Reed, 1; Virginia Sung, 1.
- **Team of the Year**: 2000 Olympic Team, 5; 1999 Pan American Team, 2.
Enron Millennium Friendship Tour

October 5-16, 2000 • A Daily Diary by Mimi Bosika

INTRODUCTION

It was only a year ago that USA Table Tennis and the Chinese Table Tennis Association began discussing a youth trip to China. Several months later, our two associations informed Adham Sharara, the president of the International Table Tennis Federation, of our proposed partnership pact. President Sharara enthusiastically endorsed our plans. Within 60 days, Enron, one of the leading energy and communications companies in the world, emerged as the corporate partner for the trip.

The groundwork for the trip was actually laid many years earlier when China extended an invitation to USA's National Team in 1971. Shortly after that trip President Nixon and Premier Chou En-Lai signed the historic accord which remains, to this day, the foundation for trade and diplomatic relations between the United States and China. Slogans such as "Ping Pong Power" and "Ping Pong Diplomacy" emerged as a result of the new relationship between our two countries.

Our USA Youth Team will experience a vastly different China than our National Team did 29 years ago. In 1971, there was no cross boarder trade between the two countries. Today it is in excess of $100 billion annually. Cell phones, the Internet and faster planes have brought our two countries closer than ever imagined.

The trip promises to provide USA's top youth players not only with an opportunity to compete against some of the world’s best school-age children but also a chance to experience first hand a new culture from a world that is half a day in front of us. Apart from training and competitions, the trip provides a chance for several of USA's best developmental coaches to learn from the world's best and to bring back ideas that can be used to develop future youth players.

From October 5-16 the delegation will visit Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai and Yangzhou. Following our footsteps will be a crew from Tainjin Cable TV and reporters from China World Magazine and Peoples Railway Newspaper. The people on the entourage includes:

USA Youth Team: Ashu Jain, Mark Hazinski, Howard Lamb, Michael Liu, Mikhail Kazantsev, Mimi Bosika, and Katherine Wu; USA Coaches and Staff: Jun Gao Chang, Teodor Gheorghe, Attila Malek, Mitch Seidenfeld, Bill Liu, Sheri Pittman, Ben Nisbet, Xin Peng, Technical Delegate/Communications Liaison; Corporate Partner: Greg Grissom, Sports Marketing Specialist; Chinese Table Tennis Association: Mr. Xu Bin, Deputy Secretary General and Mr. Liu Wei; Tainjin Cable TV and reporters from China World Magazine: Yan Xue-Ning, Journalist; Peoples Railway Newspaper: Shi Jing, Reporter.

What follows is an account of the tour by Mimi Bosika, age 20, a college student from Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. Her daily account provides a glimpse of the cultural and competition experiences encountered on this exciting trip.

DAILY DIARY

After nine long years, I am finally able to travel to another country representing the United States Youth Table Tennis Team. My name is Mimi Bosika and I’ve lived in the U.S. since I was eleven years old. I am now twenty, and the Enron Millennium Tour to China is one of the last opportunities I will have to take such a trip as a youth player.

By participating in this tour, I will miss ten days of classes at Washington University. I know it’s worth it. Opportunities like this one don’t come often, and while I’m in China, I would like to indulge and remember every moment.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2000

During the plane ride to Beijing, which took about thirteen hours, I did some homework, slept, watched a movie, and talked to Ashu, Mark and Michael, my Enron Tour teammates. When the plane landed my excitement grew. At the airport, we met up with a cable TV camera crew that would join us on our trip to film a documentary about the Tour.

As I walked through airport customs, I noticed that it was 3:00 p.m. in the afternoon in China, but it was actually 3:00 a.m. at home. We entered a whole new world. I thought to myself, “I can’t wait to experience all the ways in which this country is unique.” My momentary amazement came to a pause when I realized that my luggage did not arrive! The only items in my carry-on were some books, my toiletries, and, of course, my racket. The airport authorities told me that my luggage would arrive the next day. I was worried — not because I had no other clothes, but because the first practice session was tomorrow morning and the only shoes I had were my humongous Nike sneakers. How would I ever be able to lift my feet and move!

After we checked-in at the Garden View Hotel, our Chinese hosts took us to dinner. The food was great, but I was so tired that I couldn’t hardly remember what I ate as we returned to the hotel. Before I went to bed, I was watching a Chinese television station and to my surprise, Kong Linghui and Liu Guoliang, the Chinese table tennis Olympic medallists, were guests on a talk show. I was amazed! In the United States, I have seen table tennis on TV about four times since I’ve lived there. In China, I saw a show about table tennis only hours after my arrival.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2000

Our first practice session in China was this morning and lasted three hours. When we arrived at the middle school where we played, the Chinese table tennis players welcomed us with applause as we stepped off the bus. They were very happy to see us. I remember thinking that it should have been our team applauding at them. Their hard work and table tennis strength seemed to deserve as much respect as they were displaying toward us.

During practice, I had a hard time with my footwear due to my heavy shoes. Nevertheless, I noticed that the female players were very consistent and that they seemed more comfortable playing with the 40mm ball. I played five matches and lost two. I knew that I had my work cut out for me for the upcoming formal competition on Monday.

This afternoon we went to the Forbidden City. The City was built in the 1400s by the Ming Dynasty. It was an honor to walk on the same ground as former Chinese Emperors. How amazing it was to actually
visit the place that I was only able to read about in books! I absolutely had to buy a book about this place. The funny thing is that I negotiated my price to 50 yuan, while Attila, one of the U.S. coaches, bought his for 100! Since one dollar equals about eight yuan, I bought a great souvenir for only $6.25.

It was almost time for our formal dinner of the trip and I still hadn't received my luggage. I was in trouble. Sneakers and warm-ups would not suffice for an event organized by the respectable Chinese Table Tennis Association. About five minutes before our departure to dinner, Sheri Pittman, USATT president, offered me one of her outfits. Luckily, she and I are about the same size, except for our feet! Since the shoes she gave me were a size and a half too big, Bill Lui actually had to keep me from falling over as I walked. The dinner went from being potentially disastrous to very entertaining.

It was a privilege to be in the company of the Xu Yinsheng, the President of the China Table Tennis Association (and past president of the International Table Tennis Federation), who also gave us a wonderful crystal gift on behalf of his association. I concluded that international table tennis trips was one of my favorite things to do.

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2000**

One thousand five hundred eighty-seven steps! I cannot believe it actually took that many steps to reach the top of the Great Wall. But we did it. Our whole team. I took us about forty-five minutes to do it, and we sweated the entire way. Reaching the top and looking down on the Chinese mountainside was not only fun and rewarding - it also says something about the athletes that are on this tour. They may not be better tennis players than the Chinese, but they have the passion to achieve something great. No matter how difficult the climbing became, they did not give up. They had the motivation and the strength. They only needed the opportunity. I was very proud to be in their company as their team-mate. On the way down the wall we all stopped to get an engraved certificate for our accomplishment. This is probably the most valuable souvenir I bought.

Next we went shopping in a classy, six-story shopping mall. While Michael, Katherine and I were negotiating the price of some expensive souvenirs; I noticed Ashu, Mark, and Howard debating whether to buy the great-looking and cheap designer watches. Each of them ended up buying a watch for about $10 and they all matched. Despite the fact that the watches would probably fall apart in a week, the boys continued to brag about them and even wore them during practice.

We had dinner at an earlier time tonight because we were going to go to an acrobatic show. I was exhausted and I could barely keep my eyes open on the bus ride to the show. However, the acrobatics were so unbelievable that I absolutely had to stay awake. I can't decide which was more amazing - the girl who balanced four people on her head or the man who rode a bike with nine people on it.

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2000**

We had our first formal team competition today and I was very disappointed with the way I played. I lost two matches, but I believe that I should have won both. However, should haves and could haves don't mean a thing. I did not deserve to win simply because I did not put in as much practice and hard work lately as the Chinese players. In addition, I am still having a difficult time adjusting to the 40mm ball. I hope that I will be much more successful in the upcoming competitions. Overall, the rest of the team members seemed to be pleased with their performance. In other words, the Chinese school players have not demolished us yet!

Later today we traveled to Tianjin by bus. There, we encountered numerous signs welcoming the Enron Millennium Friendship Tour. We felt very honored to receive such special treatment, but we had no idea that the best had yet to come.

In the evening, we went to a Peking opera show that the local community organized in our honor. It featured Tianjin school children. Upon entering the auditorium we saw hundreds of students clapping for our team. I wish I had a picture of our enormous grins! The excitement was overwhelming. During the show, numerous cameras filmed us hoping to capture our reactions to the opera. I thought the show was different from anything I had seen ever. The performers wore masks and very high shoes. Their voices corresponded to the high sounding melody of the jing hu, a predominant string instrument played in the opera. After the opera, we were invited on stage to take a picture with the performers. We were as excited to be in their presence as they were to be in ours.

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2000**

This morning we had a practice session at a middle school in Dagang. The players here were a little better than the players in Beijing. For example, Ashu played a 13-year-old boy who defeated him in a practice match. Also, I played with an eight-year-old girl whose level was around 2000 in rating. After the practice, a few dozen school children wanted to speak with us in English and asked for our addresses. We gave them some American candy and postcards from our hometowns. They were thrilled that we visited their school and we were impressed with their generosity.

In the afternoon we received the most amazing welcome from Tianjin Middle School No. 10. During the entire ceremony, I remember wondering what we had done to deserve such wonderful treatment. And the truth is that we did not deserve it, but the Tianjin people seemed unwilling to settle for anything less.

As we got off the bus, the school band was playing the drums, and hundreds of students and citizens gathered around to welcome...
us. All of us received flowers and enjoyed several dance routines presented by young school children. Later, Ben and Greg told me that our arrival at the Tianjin Middle School No. 10 was featured on a Chinese television station. Next, there was an official welcoming ceremony where Sheri gave a speech. As in the other ceremonies, she thanked our Chinese hosts for their kindness and exchanged gifts with them. Sheri said something that I thought was very important. She mentioned the Ping Pong Diplomacy, whose motto was “Friendship First.” However, today, she requested that the new motto become “Friendship Forever.” It seems to me that through trips such as these, we are not only able to learn about table tennis, but also improve our diplomatic relations with China and strengthen our friendship.

One of the welcomes the U.S. team received.

I played a little better in today’s formal team match, but still felt that I could improve. Meanwhile, Katherine played well, Michael and Misha faced very tough competition in their age group, and Ashu, Mark, and Howard were very close to winning their team match, but lost. After the matches, most of us were displeased with our performance. This Chinese School Team demonstrated their talent and hard work. Also, their schoolmates were very supportive and proud, cheering loudly throughout the competition. In general, the intense table tennis experience at Tianjin taught us many things, such as the importance of remaining calm, fighting hard, and accepting a loss.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2000

We spent most of the day traveling to Shanghai. First, we took a bus ride to the Beijing airport and from there flew to our new destination. On the airplane, I was lucky to sit between Enron’s Greg Grissom and Ben Nisbet. I thought about how fortunate we’ve been to have Greg join us on the trip. His and Enron’s interest in our sport indicated that there is potential for a great future for table tennis in the United States. Also, as I listened to Ben talk about the future plans of USATT, I concluded that our organization will greatly prosper through some new programs and services that USATT plans to implement soon.

Upon arrival in Shanghai, we were told that this city’s population is 12 million. I realized that Shanghai is one of China’s most modern cities when we arrived at the Pudong Airport, which was built last year to commemorate 50 years of Chinese independence. Our tour guide, Florence, told us that the Pudong side of Shanghai, which is located east of the Yellow River, was developed only in the last ten years. I was impressed! There were hundreds of skyscrapers throughout the city. In fact, Florence said that there were a total of 3,000 skyscrapers in Shanghai. In China, a skyscraper is defined as a building over 30 stories. This evening I was very exhausted from traveling and I certainly looked forward to going to bed at the luxurious, four-star Jianguo Hotel.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2000

I was very tired at the end of the day. In the morning, we attended a practice session at Shanghai High School. Instead of playing many practice matches, we mostly did footwork and consistency drills. I was paired up with a left-handed girl who was very consistent and had especially quick and smooth footwork. Also, Ashu was very happy to play with a 19-year-old boy. For once he wouldn’t feel bad about struggling with a player who was five or six years younger than him.

After practice we went to eat a light lunch before our afternoon competition. As always, Ashu and I had to specially order our food because we are vegetarian. Both of us felt very lucky that the people at the restaurants were willing to experiment with cooking vegetarian meals and they always delivered tasty dishes. Our last formal team match ended very successfully as Misha (Mikhail Kazantsev) and Ashu won the final matches in their team tie. Katherine and I lost our team match 2:4. I lost against the girl whom I had practiced with in the morning. She played well and I simply failed to perform once again. However, this time I wasn’t very upset. I just realized that I needed to go home and practice much more to gain consistency using the big ball.

This evening we went on a cruise on the Xang Pu River. While most of the Tour participants remained on deck, I decided to stay inside the boat because it was very cold. Still, I was able to see the entire Bund, or shoreline, filled with new and modern buildings. The entire Bund was lit up with translucent colors, and I was able to realize the immense size of the city and the large number of new buildings that are being constructed. I think that the mix of traditional and modern architecture in Shanghai is what makes this city so exciting and popular.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2000

Before our last practice session, we attended a lecture at Shanghai High School. According to the principal, dozens of the high school’s alumni have held high positions in the Chinese government. Our lecture was about Chinese history and culture. I learned so many interesting things about the famous Chinese dynasties, and about the cultural differences between China and the United States. For example, the teacher who was giving the lecture explained that the Chinese, unlike the Americans, had special finger symbols for expressing numbers. Then I understood why the Chinese players had a hard time comprehending scores that I tried to articulate with my hands. We have completely different symbols for numbers!

TIGER WOODS & ERIC OWENS:
AN OLYMPIC TABLE TENNIS COMMERCIAL

By Larry Hodges

Some of you may have seen the series of TV commercials where Tiger Woods attempts to compete in Olympic events using golf clubs. One of the commercials shows him playing table tennis with a golf club (an iron) against Eric Owens!

The commercial was for Buick, a sponsor of Tiger Woods. Although the final commercial was only 30 seconds long, it took five days of filming in Toronto to produce. Most of the time was spent working with Eric and double for Tiger, where the two would go through the motions while preliminary filming took place from various angles, and the final filming was planned. (No balls were used in the filming, except when the “actors” when they weren’t being filmed. The ball was digitally inserted by computer later on.) On the fifth day, Tiger appeared for the first time – but after four days of work, they were able to simply show him what motions to go through.

Eric hit around with Tiger for many hours on the final day. He said, “Tiger has a pretty good face. But his hand was pretty awful. But he learned very fast.”

On the day they were done, Tiger gave Eric one of his golf gloves.

Eric said there was security everywhere where Tiger came on the set, which was surrounded by a very high fence (fans couldn’t see through it). Tiger fans surrounded the area so they could get a glimpse of him when he came and went.

The Screen Actors Guild fined Tiger $100,000 for doing the commercial – it turned out he did it with non-union members during the six-month SAG strike. “I have relationships to uphold with my sponsors who have supported me over the years. This is in no way a stance against the union,” Tiger said. He agreed to the fee – $50,000 of it was suspended as long as he didn’t make any commercials during any future strikes.
In the afternoon we were given tours of the Double Happiness factories where rackets, tables and balls were being produced. We were able to see the step-by-step process for completing the final products, from measuring the roundness of the balls to evaluating the thickness of the rubbers. Having seen where and how the Double Happiness products are produced, I think I will appreciate them more in the future because I will remember the hard work and attention to detail that was put into them.

This evening we all dressed up for a dinner banquet hosted by Double Happiness. On the bus trip to the restaurant, I saw through a window of another restaurant a TV which was showing a match of the World Cup in Yangshou. I wanted to ask the bus driver to stop so we could all get out and enjoy the telecast, but we had an appointment and we were already late. At the banquet, not only did we receive gifts from the company, but we also had a great time. After enjoying tons of tasty dishes, we watched Mr. Yu Bin’s entertaining karaoke performance. Before the night was over, all the Tour participants, the Chinese hosts, the Double Happiness representatives, and even the TV camera crew, were either singing, laughing, clapping, or cheering. Our last evening in Shanghai ended up being unforgettable.

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2000**

Yangshou, here we come! This is where the Men’s World Cup is taking place and our Tour team has been invited to watch by the ITTF. Not only are we able to watch, but we were so close to the players that we could practically hear them breathing! That is, our VIP seats were located only feet away from the playing table. I was extremely excited to watch the quarterfinal and semifinal matches.

My favorite quarterfinal match was between Saive and Primorac. The two players exchanged numerous counterloops while the audience watched in awe. The venue provided seats for about 3,500 people. There was only one table so all eyes were on the two players. During each match the participants who were not playing sat across from us on the opposite side of the table. It was entertaining to watch them when they left their seats because they would immediately be surrounded by many people who wanted their autographs.

I also enjoyed watching Ma Lin and Jorgen Persson playing against each other. The audience obviously went crazy every time Ma Lin won a great point. Frequently, we heard young children yelling “Ma Lin Jia You!” The direct translation for this is “Ma Lin, add oil (or gas)!”, but really they were just cheering him on. The match was especially entertaining for the audience when Persson won several points, but against Ma Lin.

After the quarters and semis, we headed back to our hotel. Since we were staying at the same one as the World Cup players, security was very tight at the door. Outside, dozens of people were waiting for the players to arrive so they could take the stars’ pictures and get autographs. Even in the hotel lobby, security had to escort the players to sit across from us. I was extremely excited to watch the quarterfinal and semifinal matches.

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2000**

After breakfast, we went on a relaxing tour of the beautiful Slender West Lake. At about 3:00 P.M. we departed for the arena. We were all very excited to hear that Misha would put on an exhibition match against a young Chinese player before the Quarterfinal match of Saive and Wang Liqin, who would play for the third place title. Misha was a little nervous to perform in front of a large crowd, which was in excess of 4,000 people, but he actually won! Also, Sheri gave a speech thanking everyone and concluded by saying that “Americans love China.” It is so true! We were treated like kings the entire time and our tour had the perfect finale—a close-up view of the World Cup Final.
Interview With Cai Zhenhua

Men’s Coach, Chinese National Team
Courtesy of the Chunglau Table Tennis Page at http://members.home.net/chunglau/TT/ttindex.htm

What are your impressions of matches with the 40mm ball?
Cai: We congratulate Ma Lin for winning the first big ball world title. Overall, the contests were exciting. The players appear to have calmly accepted the new ball. If they can make further adjustments, they will be able to apply their techniques better. The application of big ball will spawn a series of changes, in the equipment for example. Some players did not play well, but we could not judge their levels from one tournament. The great players will adjust quickly, based on their great understanding of the game.

How do you evaluate your three players?
Cai: Ma Lin showed that he could stand up to pressure in this tournament, and that he is more mature now. One reason he did well was because he had more training with the big ball. Kong and Wang stayed in Sydney after the Olympics and did not come back until October 2. They participated in a lot of celebration activities, so they have trained very little, and therefore are limited in how they applied their skills.

There was news that Liu Guoliang may retire because of the big ball. Is that true?
Cai: I saw the news, and I don’t understand how some reporters can write about things they do not understand. They have to be responsible. Liu played very well in the Olympics; the fact that he was in the semifinals proved that. His opponents were very strong. He played extremely well against Persson. My understanding is that Liu will not retire now.

What is the Chinese team plan to adjust to the big ball?
Cai: Every country faces the same problem with the big ball: how to train and develop the players. I feel that the big ball demands more from a player’s physical ability and conditioning. The Chinese players, especially those on the national team, have to increase their physical ability, and we need to make adjustments in our training equipment. From a technical point of view, the fundamentals and techniques developed with the small ball still apply; the key is adjustment.

Will the big ball favor the shakehand or the penholder style?
Cai: We insist on having different styles on our team. We can only know the effects on the styles after extended observation. In this tournament two penholders were in the final. I felt that Kim got into the final based on his small-ball skills and experience. I think it is unreasonable to expect that the 2nd or 3rd tiered players will be able to compete at the top just because the ball size has been changed. The world-class players will make quick adjustments. Even though no European made it to the finals, I still think that the Europeans will adapt better to the big ball.

Will the big ball make it easier for China to win the World Team title back?
Cai: Everyone is starting from the same place, and has the same chance. Our next goal is definitely the World Team title, as far as I am concerned.

THE 2ND NATIONAL TEAM TRAINING WITH THE BIG BALL

This article appears in the October issue of Table Tennis World. It both summarizes the Chinese national team’s initial experiences with the new 40mm ball, and describes how the Chinese train their junior players.

While the first national team was preparing for the Olympics, the Institute of Table-Tennis and Badminton held a group training session for the elite juniors, with the 2nd national team coaches acting as trainers and teachers. The purpose of the group session was to provide advanced big ball training for the young players, to understand the characteristics of the big ball, and to establish a training strategy. Here is a preliminary summary of what we have learned.

A. Technical Aspects
1. Because the ball is bigger and heavier, serves have less spin. Players who relied on strong serves to gain the initiative will face new challenges.
2. The forward speed of loops is reduced, making it hard to loop with power, and also hard to finish points. Some players would easily get frustrated and try too much or too hard, resulting in needless unforced errors. This tells us that we have to focus on strengthening the ability to continuously attack.
3. The trajectory of the incoming ball is shorter, and appears to drop sharply. If one tries to hit the ball based on previous experiences, one often feels that the ball is “hard to reach.” So the contact point has to be moved forward. The height of the trajectory over the table appears to be about the same as with the small ball, but when away from the table, it is lower. Because it is shorter and lower, loops often go into the net.
4. Because there is less speed and spin, it is easier to counterloop.
5. Choppers felt that it was harder to put a lot of spin on chops, and also hard to chop long. Counterlooping or attacking away from the table is not as powerful as before. But since the opponents’ loops are not as powerful, it is easier to chop safely.
6. The traditional close-to-the-table, fast-attacking, pips-out penhold style is not disadvantaged. Because of the close-to-the-table position, and because opponents’ loops are not as powerful, penholders find it easier to defend against loops, and easier to hit loops coming from a distance.

B. Equipment
We used the new Double-Happiness G888 and G777 rubber/sponge sets. Thickness of the sponge varies from 2.2-2.25mm, with a hardness index of 40-42. We previously noted that using standard 2.0-2.1mm, 43-45 hardness, G888 rubber/sponge sets, it is easy to hit into the net when counter-looping away from the table. The new equipment corrects that problem. Choppers still have the problems mentioned earlier; we need to work on this.

C: Conjectures and Recommendations
1. The increased ball size leads to increased air friction, which slows down the ball in mid-flight and reduces its spin. In order to add speed and spin, we have to improve our application of force on the ball. We can increase the range of some motions, and we also need to increase the explosiveness by strengthening the waist, arm and wrist.
2. Because rallies are longer, we need to increase the ability to rally without sacrificing our first-three-shot advantages. Developing footwork so that our players can move quickly and accurately is key to superior techniques.
3. The new ball naturally has its own characteristics, and we need to continuously experiment with the new ball to develop new techniques. This will insure the continued success of our national team.


Personnel: Since some of the 2nd national team players are training with the first team, we have added new players from the 24 province capitals. This will help us develop prospects for the 2008 Olympics. Out of these players, 28 of them have never been to group training, and that constitutes 52% of the players. This is the largest group of players to participate in group training, and also the youngest group. Average age is 15.4 years.
Stiga, Escalade Sports and The Table Tennis Pioneers are very proud of the Olympic Efforts of TEAM USA.

"The most important thing in the Olympic Games is not to win, but to take part; just as the most important thing in life is not the triumph, but the struggle. The essential thing is not to have conquered, but to have fought well."

- Pierre de Coubertin, founder of the Modern Olympic Games

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Western Open

SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA • OCTOBER 6-8, 2000 • BY ALAN WILLIAMS

The fifth and final stop of the 2000 Butterfly North American Tour, the Western Open, could convince you the best was saved for last. The conditions, tournament operation, player’s behavior and the quality of play were outstanding. The tournament and the Tour climaxed with a wonderful Open Final between Fan Yi Yong and Cheng Yinghua, a fitting conclusion to the Western Open’s excellence.

The Western Open took place in San Diego’s Balboa Park Activity Center on October 6-8. This facility is the ‘home base’ of the San Diego Table Tennis Association, and is the best Table Tennis site I have ever seen. The wood floors had a ‘grippier’ feel than expected, the lighting was superb, the space tremendous and the layout outstanding. Pam Ramsey, Clark Mitchell, Kamran Azimzadeh and the California folks had promised us satisfaction with the hall, and their word was good as gold. It was also the first tour stop to use the new 40mm Butterfly ball. Although the tournament was supplied with the balls, none were for sale at the Martin-Kilpatrick display. Still, it seems that a substantial number of Butterflies escaped!

With 26 tables on site, the tournament staff ready and the Butterfly booth open for business, play began on Friday night with Under 3200 and Under 4200 Doubles, while Hardbat Singles. Rudy Miranda and his partner Guillermo Morales defeated the husband and wife team of Donna and David Sakai to claim the 4200 Doubles, while Winston Ngai and Ky Nguyen triumphed in the Under 3200 category.

Two players who had very successful tournaments met in the Hardbat Singles Final. Loc Bao Ngo and Nick Mintsiveris played a rousing match with plenty of fighting spirit. Nick won the first game at 19, and Loc returned the favor. The deciding third game found no ‘quit’ in either player, with eight deuce points played! In the end, it was Loc Bao Ngo, 30-28. Allen McDermott captured Under 2000 Hardbat Singles over Bill Ukapatayasakul.

On Saturday, Saul Weinstein, who entered the tournament rated 1376, displayed remarkable improvement, losing in the final of Under 1700 to German Caramarillo, 10,15. Saul’s joy was contagious as he advanced through the category. New USATT member Aaron Shapiro was obviously no stranger to the sport, winning matches against 1700+ players with his inverted/anti combination. Nick Mintsiveris continued his winning ways, finishing second to Dave Sakai in Over 50 Singles, and defeating Allen McDermott for the Over 60 title.

Wade Sun pulled a ‘double dip’ by winning Under 2000 over Miguel Angel Salcido, the Under 1850 Champ, by scores of 17 & 22. He then took possession of Under 2125 Singles as well with a 10, 12 win over Ronald Spencer.

One of the most attractive matches of the tournament, the Under 2250 Final, pitting Courtney Roberts against Anzhelika Tyan, drew much attention. Roberts’ full-court retrieving and counter-looping skills were pushed to the limit by Tyan. She played an aggressive quick off-the-bounce game, setting up the classic encounter between aggressor and defender. In the end, Courtney prevailed 18,-18,17 in a contest that was a pure, athletic delight to watch.

‘Iron Man’ Loc Bao Ngo now made his presence felt, gaining the finals in three consecutive categories. Philip Lim relegated Ngo to 2nd place in both the Under 2375 and Under 2500 events, by straight game wins of 19, 19 and 14, 18. Tournament President Richard Lee was less fortunate, losing to Ngo in the Under 2600 Final, 15,16. Added to his semifinal appearance against Fan Yi Yong, it was quite a performance by Ngo, who may have usurped David Sakai’s ‘hardest-working player’ title at this one!

As fine as all these matches were, they only served as prelude to the biggest showdown of the tournament, the Open Singles Final. Neither Cheng Yinghua nor Fan Yi Yong lost a game in their way to this pre-destined meeting, despite the best efforts of Ngo, Richard Lee, Tri Dinh, David Roberts and Courtney Roberts to derail them. Tournament Director Fong Hsu’s scheduling for the Final worked perfectly, as the grandstands filled with players and spectators anxious to see the tournament’s two top seeds compete for the $1,000 first place purse.

Cheng had been unusually animated all weekend, beamming and laughing, cracking jokes and enjoying himself. Obviously, the trip to the Sydney Olympics had rejuvenated him. He was sporting a new blade as well, the Butterfly Primorac Carbon, reportedly on the advice of Werner Schlager. But Cheng was all business as the two Finalists stepped into the court for a best of five match.

It would be easy to believe that these two gentlemen do not like each other. Certainly, each is in the other’s way when it comes to ‘bragging rights’ for America’s best player. Fan had beaten Cheng at last spring’s Los Angeles Open. Cheng had beaten Fan at the following North American Teams. And while there was no trash-talk, obvious unsportsmanlike conduct, or any perceived slight, neither man had spoken to the other all weekend.

Even in the two-minute warm-up it was obvious that these two were in a class by themselves. Fan’s backhand is rightly renowned as a world-class shot. Cheng’s forehand is a play-controlling wonder. It was the first time either had faced the other with the new 40mm ball, and a burble of speculation provided background for the showdown.

The first game was a seesaw battle. Fan’s famous backhand, cross-court and down-the-line was a consistent winner, while Cheng’s serve and control of play offset his opponent’s aggressive shot-making. But at the end, Fan had built a narrow lead, 18-20 with Cheng holding serve. Except, of course, that it was not the end. Cheng scored one, two, yes!, four consecutive points to rescue the first game, 22-20.

The San Diegans were really into the match now, appreciative and cheering each great shot and there were many. But Fan seemed to drift away in the second game, perhaps still stunned by Cheng’s comeback. Cheng took advantage of his opponent’s state of mind, 21-14.

I have had the opportunity to see Cheng play many times. But never before have I seen him as wary of an opponent as he was of Fan on this day. With cause, Dear Reader, with cause. Down two games to none, Fan was dangerous and committed to reversing his fortunes. Now it was Cheng who struggled to protect a small lead as Fan just kept coming, making one crowd-pleasing shot after another. Cheng’s corner calls a timeout, to try and chill the advance, but it has no large impact as the two players stare each other down, deuce in the third. Now the crowd is really rocking and rolling as not one, not two, but yes, three deuce points pass. The match hangs by a thread but Fan has no fear and wins the third game, 25-23.
It is a moment straight from my best Table Tennis dreams. The crowd is knowledgeable and excited. The players are wonderfully matched, with more than money on the line. The setting is a fantastic facility and the grandstands filled. Cheng is not cocky, but determined as he stares in to begin the fourth game of the match. Fan returns the favor on his serve as well. There is a palpable contest of wills going on out there. But in the end, one man must win. Cheng takes a lead and stretches it. With the number of times the tide has turned, no one takes it for granted. But Fan cannot find the opening he needs, and Cheng wins, 21-16 in the fourth.

The two shake hands. Once again, Cheng is animated, laughing and joking. But I give Fan a moment before offering my congratulations on his $500 finish. As the spectators stream for the exits, deep in conversation about the stirring final, the tournament staff and the San Diego club members begin dismantling the tournament, I feel that I have been part of something very special, the Western Open, final stop on the 2000 Butterfly North American Tour.


Over 40: Cheng Yinghua d. Dave Sakai, def.
Over 50: David Sakai d. Nick Mintsiveris, -14,15,17.

Under 22 Men: Philip Lim d. Auria Malek, 17,8
Under 16: 1st Auria Malek; 2nd Michael Amren.
Under 13: 1st Randy Alan Colio; 2nd Earl James Alto.
Under 10: 1st Don James Alt; 2nd Amanda Kazemi.
U2500: Philip Lim d. Loc Bao Ngo, 14,18.
U2375: Philip Lim d. Loc Bao Ngo, 19,19.
U2250: Courtney Roberts d. Anzhelika Tyan, 18,-18,17.
U2125: Wade Sun d. Ronald Spencer, 10,12.
U1850: Miguel Angel Salcido d. Ralph Agajanian, 13,18.
U1700: German Carillo d. Saul Weinstein, 10,15.
U1400: Peter Randall d. Pablo Siqueiros, 14,19.
U1200: Ralph Harriman d. Valiant Chou, 19,12.
U1000: Alan Williams d. Crystal Chin, 16,-18,12.
Novice: 1st Ira Framo; 2nd Paul Mak.

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U3200 Doubles: 1st Nguyen/Ngai; 2nd Chew/Chwa.
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Ah, the first Thanksgiving of the new millennium.

So did Richard Lee’s well-organized, third annual North American Teams Championships at the Baltimore Convention Center offer a weekend of synergistic stimulation we can all be thankful for?

Believe it. Believe it certainly for this year’s winning father-coach/son-player Varga-led Hungarian team who, after victories in ‘96 and ‘97, had been disappointed with the controversial finishes that followed. The Sichuan Men’s team, holders of the last two Championships, did not defend their title, but a team headed by China’s former World and Olympic Doubles Champion Chen Longcan proved a formidable runner-up.

Teams aplenty there were in this Butterfly-sponsored tournament – 190 showed – which meant that for three days hundreds of players, age 5 to 80, enjoyed exhausting themselves against one another on tables that for the best of the best courted Taraflex red-carpet relief from the punishing concrete. Fortifying NATC President Lee for uncomplaining hours at his Tournament Control Bastion were Co-Directors Fong Hsu (helped by computer director Zachary Sng) and Alan Williams (playfully informative at the mike). Registration Director Wendy Troy was omnipresent pleasant and patient, and Azmy Ibrahim as Chief Referee and Dick Evans as his Assistant, aware of the scarcity of U.S. and Canadian umpires, were always reliably on call. What Canadian umpires there were, I might add, were dressed not in tailored red blazers reserved exclusively for CTTA International Umpires but in matching casual windbreaker-like jackets. “National umpires? They looked like truck drivers,” said one outspoken U.S. critic.

Alan Williams shared Publicity responsibility with brother Dave, and after a local reporter had come round for a story, USATT President Sheri Pittman, in fashionable cream-colored pants suit collared by a U.S.-China button, obliged with a TV interview. Diplomacy was further spotlighted at the generous Saturday night reception for Presidents Pittman and Lee, those attending in their role as USATT Board members, Dennis Taylor and Barney Reed, and all the hard-working tournament staff, including the many volunteers. Our hosts were representatives of the Washington-Baltimore 2012 Olympic Coalition, who of course are hoping to bring a bigger event – the Olympic Games – to their proven sports-minded area.

For the moment, though, at least for me, this 141-table tournament was big enough, and I’d best move on to the other players in this three-day drama. Bidding to advance on Friday to a level they’d feel comfortably competitive at for

**North American Teams Results**

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Rapid

The rubber sheet of ballartist, Champion Vladimir Samsonov, who has his "golden hands" helped develop this rubber-perfectly suited for the aggressive game of the new generation. Soft sponge and extremely elastic rubber layer provide speed and spin and at the same time give you a lot of ball feeling due to optimum ball control. Whether you speed glue or not you will be excited about the playing characteristics of this rubber. Speed: 9.2, Spin: 9.2 Price: $29 Item: RTRA

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the Saturday-Sunday weekend were 186 teams (4 teams were seeded out). On being carefully placed according to a snake-system variant based on the ratings of their three top players, each of these teams began modified round robin play, best 5 of 9 matches, in 16 Preliminary Groups. After Friday’s competition, these teams would be sorted into alphabetized Classes, and the winners of the 16 Groups would then join the four top-seeded teams — CWT (an acronym for players playing in leagues in Japan — Wang Yunggang, Akira Takashi, and Chen Longcan); Hungary (Fan Yi Yong, Zoltan Varga, and Ferenc Pazsy); American Allstars (Cheng Yinghua, David Zhuan, Todd Sweeris, and Chang Jun Gao); and the Landau team from Germany (Dana Weber, Robert Garados, and Sanada Koji). Only these 20 Class A teams would have a chance — theoretically have a chance — of winning the $6,000 first prize, the $2,400 runner-up prize, and the $1,200 3rd-place money.

A bone of contention that would surface — and some observers viewed as more important than our Vegas National’s because of the presence of high-quality foreign players, professionals who make their living at the Sport — was the displacement of prize money heretofore given to the 5th and 6th-place finishers; $500 was now being given to the winning team in both the B’s and C’s. This, I think, is wrong, for it not only rewards mediocrity at the expense of excellence, it offers — what can’t happen in any of the other prize money events — an incentive to teams, to players capable of advancing to Class A but who have no chance to win prize money there — to deliberately or half-heartedly dump matches.

Obviously it’s the top competitors that everyone wants to watch. Indeed, any player who intended to bring a guest to the final had to purchase a $5 ticket. But of course, as we’ll see, it was worth it. And so were other matches among the top-seeded teams. The players who are most serious and most skilled should be rewarded, especially when they make the effort to come here from foreign shores and give domestic spectators the enjoyment of seeing their all-out seriousness and high-spirited intensity.

I hasten to say, though, that the tournament did preserve its lighter touches among the masses, as it should. The “Boo’s Brothers,” though minus Pete May and Jim McQueen, seemed no whit subdued this year, even picked up a Sister. Other undignified teams, or, rather, team names, some in good-for-a-chuckle, subtle and not so subtle poor taste (rivaling with harmless wit Jim Williams’ perennial appearance: “Asgard”-woven shirt, horned helmet, and “Return to Sender” hammer), were Big Momma and the Boy, Team Big Balls, Four Play, Gluebox 40. The Feminine Touch, Jan’s Olive, and Three Guys and a Girl (the three guys on this team — whose real team name had been censored — of four were not blundering dances of course, but they did have an unimpressive 5076 rating — X Class to the censors).

**PRELIMINARY PLAY**

Among the 16 placed A players, there were some mild upsets and these were where, as the snake system coiled back on itself in Preliminary Groups 15 and 16, you might expect them to be. NY TTC #1 (Liu Hui Yuan, Alex Tam, and Vitaly Koretsky) downed the Canadian Junior Boys (Winnipeg’s Pierre-Luc Hinse, and Montrealers Ignacio Cabrera and David Ramdeen) 5-2. Liu carried the banner for his Queens Club with 3 wins. And the legendary Tam added 2 more, setting an example for youth and for whatever tobacco company name you’d care to cough up. Moving fast toward 60, Alex hustled around the court, then puffed far more contentedly off it than on. But, no need to sweat, both the winners and the losers here would each get $500, since the NY team would take the Senior prize, and the Canadian Junior Boys would go on to win the B’s.

Also 5-2 failing to advance was last year’s Class B runner-up team, Mid-America (led by 2364-rated Bogdan Lewandowski and supported by Paul Pashuku, Mark Nordby, and Richard Hicks). Mexico B (Carlos Chiu, Olmo Zavalo, Rafael Mendez, and Sergio Blanco) beat them — largely because Pashuku and Nordby couldn’t will quick adjustments to Zavalo and Mendez’s jumping-bean serves. Perhaps because Mark won a gutsy 19 in the 3rd match against Chiu, and Hicks got by Zavalo in 3, Mid-America remained unimpressed. “This team won’t win a match tomorrow” was their consensus. (But they were fooled the more — on Saturday, in their 5-team round robin, Mexico B was 2 and 20).

**ROUND ROBIN: GROUP IA**

In Group 1, the CWT team didn’t lose a match. Not only is 1985 World runner-up Chen Longcan playing professionally in Japan, but so are Wang and Takashi — Chen in an Association-approved league, and Wang and Takashi in a “renegade” one, promoted by an enthusiast who’s enlisted such world-class players as Jorgen Persson and Kim Taek Soo, both of whom it was said that penholder Wang had recently beaten.

Wang, I’d heard, had been coached by Kong Linghui’s father. As for Chen Longcan, the quick story was he’d gone to a table tennis boarding school at 8, was on the Sichuan Province team at 13, and away from home almost for good at 15. Among the doubles successes he valued was his win at the ’87 China National Games with his friend Cheng Yinghua. He was and still is one of the revered players of his time. No surprise then, as Bruce Liu was telling me, that at a Chinese restaurant here in Baltimore a waiter recognized him, and personally bought him red wine. Naturally, too, he and his party were given special dishes not on the menu and invited to smoke in an available non-smoking room. Now that Chen’s playing days are almost over, he expects to coach a top girl’s team in Japan.

No reason of course for all the other teams in this CWT-dominated Group to give up, since the second-place finisher would also advance to the single-elimination quarter’s. However, as only Liu Hui Yuan would win scattered matches for the aging N.Y. Club, they never challenged. And when right away the USA Junior Men (Keith Alban, Mark Hazinski, and Han Xiao) fell 5-0 in their opening match against the Top Canadian Men (Bence Csaba, Xavier Therien, and Fazlul Kassam), advancement wasn’t possible for them either — though they, too, were awarded $500 as the top Junior Boys. Later in the afternoon, after they led Jerry Wartski’s Manhattan (99th & Broadway) Club players (Atanda Musa, Abass Ekun, and Renata Peluchova) 3-1, Alban, current U.S. Boys’ High School Singles and Doubles Champion, had to settle for just two wins when he couldn’t get the 3rd game from Musa, and Manhattan ran the tie out.

The all important match-up in this Group was the 11:00 a.m. one between the N.Y. Manhattan Club players and the Top Canadian Men. Young Csaba’s father, who is now the Canadian Junior Development Coach, was born in Canada but grew up in Hungary and so has ties there. Bence lived there too for some time, took advantage of the coaching available, and became good enough to play in Hungary’s 1st Division League. After opening with straight game success against Bence, Bence’s 4th match was key — a 19, 24 (after being up 20-16 match point) squeaker over “Mansa” Musa, best remembered in the U.S. for leading his Nigerian Skypower team to a succession of U.S. Open Team Championships in the early ’80s.

Abas, under the watchful eye of his heretofore London-based brother Waheed, who’d earlier coached both him and Musa and had been the Nigerian Coach at the ’91 Chiba, Japan World’s, tried to stop the bleeding. But Therien, whose win over Ekun gave the Canadians a 4-1 lead, was just too focused. Canada’s many-time National Champion and long-time International Coach Mariann Domonkos was telling me how when Xavier was young and his father was driving him to a tournament they used to play chess together — without a board.
The Wartski team would not go down so easily though. Renata Peluchova had learned the game in her native Czechoslovakia, and on maturing had played in both the first and second division of the Bundesliga. Since she was ridiculously underrated here in the States (2100), her win over 2419-rated Kassam was not that surprising. After all, five years ago, she was ITTF-ranked among the hundred best women in the world. Musa then continued to save the day by getting the better of Therien, 18 in the 3rd. (No mean feat, for later how heroically, how joyously, Xavier played against Wang Yunggang and Chen Longcan.) Now if Peluchova could possibly beat Csaba... She won the first! But Manhattan’s skyscraper hopes were soon so clouded over that by early afternoon there was no visibility left even for the Imagination.

**ROUND ROBIN: GROUP IB**

In Group IB, Hungary didn’t lose a match. The last ranking I’d seen for Fan was three issues of our magazine ago – 2843, not bad. But how inactive am I supposed to believe he’s been? As for Varga, with no results to show in 6 months, he’s stuck in the ITTF Rankings – at World #138. So Paszy’s the one to watch out for? In ’97 at Cobo Hall he wore his hoop earrings; now he had that, or another ring, on the forefinger of his hand. Which – and here’s the rub – might oddly be helping his stroke, since in the last three years he’s gone from World #177 to #138. So Paszy’s the one to watch out for? In ’97 at Cobo Hall he wore a hoop earring; now he had that, or another ring, on the forefinger of his hand. Which – and here’s the rub – might oddly be helping his stroke, since in the last three years he’s gone from World #177 to #138.

Hapless Mexico B I’ve already conceded just two matches to – so, for the second-place laurel leaf, that leaves three contenders: Senoda (John Onifade, Sean O’Neill, Danny Seemiller, and Dave Sakai), the Top Canadian Women (Chris Xu, Wen Xiao Wang, and Petra Cada), and Maccabi USA (Razvan Cretu, Idan Levi, Eyal Adini, and Barry Dattel).

In their 9:00 a.m. opening match, the higher-rated Canadian women topped the Maccabi men, 5-3, despite giving up six straight games to former U.S. World Team Member Cretu. “My touch is always there,” said Razvan, who feels, even as I hear he’s started a limousine service, that he has to lose maybe 20 pounds if he’s to hope to play again for the U.S. abroad. In the absence of any funded USA Women’s Team here, the Canadian women won the $1200 prize. They like this tournament, for they say that playing against men forces them to try to sharpen their attack. Not that they’re lax otherwise, what with five days a week training in Ottawa and mandatory Canada Cup Matches for anyone hoping to make their World Team. Top players attend three of these weekend Cup competitions a season that feature mixed men and women singles and doubles in franchised 10-team League play, followed by Knockout matches.

Neither the Canadian women nor the Maccabi men were strong enough to beat the second-place finishers, Senoda. Former U.S. Open and Closed Champ Eric Boggan, now 37, was supposed to come out of retirement as he did last year to join this Senoda team, but, just a few days before, his back went out, and though his picture was on the cover of the Program and though his would-be teammates tried repeatedly to persuade him just to come and socialize, he never did appear in person. Against the Top Canadian Women (excluding World #24 Geng Lijuan who was in Brazil, still playing with the 38mm ball, helping her Club win a League Championship), Seemiller took three, and Onifade and O’Neill, though having absent themselves from the tournament scene in recent years, each contributed a win. John was getting an introduction to the 40mm ball, and, as Sean was saying, with less spin and more time to assess it, placement had taken on greater importance. Stay closer to the table, John, was the advice given him – the ball’s not coming out as much; and be ready, everything’s coming back. Against Maccabi USA, Onifade, who in ’89 had represented North America at the World Cup in Nairobi, lost to both Cretu and Dattel, but Seemiller again won three, and O’Neill, though losing to Razvan, added the necessary clinchers.

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**USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE • January/February 2001**

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ROUND ROBIN: GROUP IC

In Group IC, both the American Allstars and the presumed next best team in the field, Slovakia (Erik Illas, Patrik Marek, Grezo Martin, and Jaromir Truksa), would dominate the round robin prepartory to playing one another in the last tie of the evening.

Meanwhile, Atlanta (Barney J. Reed, Lee McCool, and Michelle Do) opened with a tie-testing 5-3 win over Anti-Charrue (Jean-Francois Roussy, his sister Marie-Christine Roussy, and Mathieu Raymond). This Canadian team the day before had beaten, among others, the Atlanta Dawgs (Michael Liu, John Mar, Robert Anderson, and Philip Mar), whose doggedness would eventually win them the $500 Cs. Although Reed won an important two matches against Anti-Charrue, McCool was the hero, as Marie-Christine Roussy, who’d represented Canada at the 2000 Kuala Lumpur World’s, was the heroine. Having gotten by M-C’s brother, 19 in the 3rd, Lee rallied to win the tie-deciding 8th match from M-C herself, 23-21 in the 3rd. Earlier, the Roussy girl had upset Barney, if upset it was, for Lee said that with the big ball the Canadian, mentally strong, played 150 points better than her current 2399 rating and that he couldn’t spin through her anti block and hit game. So how finally did he beat her? By giving her short, heavy underspin serves and keeping her cool with helpful visualization techniques.

The Anti-Charrue team did take the measure of M-I II (Paul David, Tahl Leiboivitz, Sharad Pandit, and Reynaldo Perez), 5-2 – with the Roussy siblings each having to give up a match to Pandit, who’d left India in the late ’80s to play for pay in the German leagues, then in ’92 played a season in England, for Liverpool, and is now a doctor living in Philadelphia. In his 11:00 tie, Sharad, pleased with that the larger ball he has more time to attack with his pips, not only won a nice match from the very experienced Slovakian player Patrik Marek but had 3-time U.S. Champion David Zhuang 1-0 and 17-14 before losing.

M-I II had its lone success with Atlanta, 5-4. At the end of the 6th match, David, Pandit, and Friday night’s $300 Hardbat Champion Perez had each posted a win, while Reed had scored twice and Lee once to tie it up at 3-5. Then, however, Barney couldn’t continue – the forefinger of his racket hand had severely cramped and he was finished for the day. “My own fault,” he said. “Poor preparation – I just didn’t have enough liquids.” McCool again tied the tie by beating Perez. But though Do was game to the 21-19 second-game end, she was unsuccessful in attacking David’s last two underspin serves.

That left the undefeated Allstars to battle undefeated Slovakia, semifinalists in ’93 and ’94 when the Team Championships were in Detroit. The winner of course would have a more favorable position in the quarter’s – more important this year since there’d be no prize money for 5th-6th.

World #109 Zhuang opened against World #157 Illas, who’d earlier stumbled against our Barney Reed. Frank Chang, Jun’s husband, volunteered to umpire, and, though Jun was playing this tie, Slovakia sportingly didn’t object. Sweeris had hurt his shoulder playing Cheng Yinghua in a recent tournament, and while he wanted to be out there on court (“I don’t watch very well”), he decided that with the National’s so near he’d better not risk re-injury now that the shoulder had almost healed. David’s tendinitis in his wrist comes and goes – and when it came at the time of our last U.S. Open he couldn’t play. For this tournament his wrist was taped, and, after starting off with a 2-0 lead in the 1st game, he promptly lost 8 straight and could never recover. But in the 2nd game he was up 8-2 ... and a winner at 12. Then in the 3rd... “Time Out,” says Team Captain Sweeris (from out of the space of time for serious table tennis).

He just couldn’t crack, loops in a beauty, and when Mar, whose doggedness would even-...
The USA Junior Developmental Team: Han Xiao, Mark Hazinski and Keith Alban.

**QUARTER'S: CWT (3) - SENODA (O)**

Liken the quarter’s tie here, best 3 out of 5 matches, to a very mismatched basketball game. CWT wins: 106 to 52.

**QUARTER'S: SLOVAKIA (3) - LANDAU (O)**

First up in this quarter is long, lean bespectacled Truksa, winner of the 1994 CNE tournament in Toronto, vs. World #137 Robert Gardos, Hungarian-born but from age 14 on playing for Austria. Although many of the points aren’t anything to write home about, the tension builds, and from the start of the 3rd game Truksa keeps his feet moving, his fist pumping, and his vocal cords exercised. From 16-all in the 3rd, Gardos goes 18-16 down and his bench calls “Time.” On his return, the Austrian fearlessly socks in a serve return - 18-17. Truksa counters with a swing, fist, and growl - 19-17. At 19-all, Gardos serves and Truksa loops in a winner. Tries to do it again, can’t - deuce. But two errors from Gardos follow, and, bending to a squat, he hammers restrainedly, staccato-like, the edge of his racket into the Tarallex cords exercised. From 16-all in the 3rd, Gardos follow, and, bending to a squat, he hammers restrainedly, staccato-like, the edge of his racket into the Tarallex.

Now it’s Illas against World #143 Koji, who, like Gardos, plays either the #1 or #2 position for his club in the Second Division of the Bundesliga... What’s this? Down 15-14 in the 1st, Koji loses the point, and begins showing everyone his racket: a wet ball, yes? No - as Illas is the first to insist. Perhaps, though, the delay breaks the Slovak’s concentration, for he loses the next 6 points and the game. But then rebounds to take the 2nd. In the 3rd, Koji up 16-12, quickly relinquishes his lead, then from 16-all, serving short into Illas’s forehand, runs it to 19-16. At which point, to the consternation of his bench, he irreversibly loses five straight (one on a nasty net at 19-all). And now, since Weber will be no match for Martin, Landau has lost any chance they had of taking home prize money.

**SEMI'S: CWT (3) - SLOVAKIA (O)**

In March of ’93, CWT’s Wang Yonggang (as the ITTF spelled it then) was World #15. He opens this tie against Illas with a 1st-game win from 16-all. However, perhaps Wang didn’t expect to be challenged so, for, down 19-17 in the 2nd, he serves into the net, and Illas, taking advantage, forces him into the deciding 3rd... Bravo! Illas is back lobbing, lobbing, lobbing, then with a fantastic upsweep of a follow-through propels a backhand counter that perhaps surprises Wang as much as it does the spectators. Problem for the Slovak, though, is at the time he’s behind 9-3, and, as he’s the first to admit, things don’t get better. Down 20-9 match-point, he serves off.

End of Slovakia’s mini-challenge.

**QUARTER'S: HUNGARY (3) - TOP CANADIAN MEN (O)**

Another runaway mismatch - see the point spread. Hungary wins: 106 to 71.

**SEMI'S: HUNGARY (3) - AMERICAN ALLSTARS (2)**

This semifinal is the one everyone’s been waiting for - and they couldn’t have asked for anything better. Zhuang, exercise-rotating his banded wrist, is first up... against Fan, whom David Roberts in the May-June, ’99 issue of our magazine has given us a detailed background of: his early successes as 1985 China Under 16 Champion, 1990 Chinese National’s semifinalist, and World #27 with impressive wins over Asian and European players, as well as his later (1998) success in championing his Hungarian Club to a Superliga title.

Zhuang, though he’s 37, six years older than Fan, looks just as fit. And at 14-all in the 1st just as competitive. Although Yong, as those in his Portland, OR home club call him, moves to 20-17, he’s troubled by one or the other of David’s high-toss serves - which, for some reason, down 20-19, David doesn’t give him, and Fan wallops in what he is given for the win. In the 2nd game, Zhuang’s off to a 4-1, 7-2 start, only to see Yong, on closing to 6-6, suddenly, casually, up-to-the-table chop a return, then fiercely explode a backhand in. A change of pace that certainly catches me off guard. But David pulls away, ties the match.

At 7-all in the 3rd, the umpire misses a let, awards the point to David, but Fan is fair, corrects the call. Down 11-9, Fan surprises Zhuang with a fast serve down the forehand line. However, David, helped by a net ball (which he expresses thanks for by kissing the net), goes up 15-10 - and Yong’s bench calls “Time!” The umpire places on Fan’s side of the table a circular object with a visible “T” on it that looks like it could hold, impartially, either a cold bottle of wine or a hot candle. When play resumes, David’s lead is reduced to 18-16, but then he gets the next point and since he has the serve, he’s going to be the winner? Uh, maybe not. At 19-18 Zhuang’s bench calls “Time!”

David then scores on a crucial serve and follow - and it’ll make the 21-19 difference. He flies from the table - is high - and seems ready to soar over the barrier into his teammates’ arms but stops just in time. Better not risk hurting self - he might have to play again.
Next up: Cheng vs. the bandana-bound, boundlessly acrobatic Pazsy. The first two games are uncontestedly traded—Cheng having been up 11-4 in the 1st, Pazsy 17-8 in the 2nd. By now more and more noontime spectators have come to watch and applaud. "I've never seen so many orientals," says a longtime local aficionado. They're all pleased Sichuan U.S. Champion Cheng is up 8-2? Not all. Some are rooting for Fan's team—and do so as Pazsy closes to 8-6. "Time!" says Capt. Sweearts. A predictable sequential reality... like what we know numerically must necessarily follow the 17-all score these evenly matched players have soon ticklishly arrived at. "USA! USA!"—Zhuang spontaneously introduces his variant of the human equation, tries to rouse nearby support for it....Down 20-18 match-point after Pazsy wickedly loops in a winner, Cheng blocks stubbornly, but can't repel what at this hour might have seemed 21-19 inevitable. Allstars 1—Hungary 1.

Now Chang against Varga. A few points into the 1st game Jun serves off, throws up her hands, rolls her eyes (Oh, what did I do? Wasn't that silly?). But she's anything but flighty. Persistently she serves to Varga's backhand, then pushes away to his forehand where he has to stretch. The match itself, as it were, strives for balance—goes Varga's way, then Chang's. Jun begins the 3rd with a succession of beautifully positioned blocks, and up 5-2 is in over the table scoring with a pip of a low, flat forehand. But Varga, grunting out topspins, evens at 6-all. Into the mid-game, each has trouble with the other's serves. Jun, down 11-9, rallies, with the help of an edge, to go 14-12 up. Then, the turning point of the match: Chang cracks what would seem a 15-12 winner, but Varga fast-hands instinctively makes a sensational 14-13 counter. Gaining momentum from this extraordinary return, he builds a 17-14 lead. And since a "Time Out" can't stop him, our U.S. titleholders in their attempt to win this tournament may be star-crossed. Hungary 2—Allstars 1.

The fourth match pits Zhuang's pips-out, rapid-fire attack against Pazsy's powerful double-wing topspin. Up 14-13 in the 1st, David breaks open the game by scoring five in a row. Up 14-18 in the 2nd, he's bringing home a winner? Maybe not. No more points while the Hungarian's serving and tipping away—18-17. Zhuang, preparing to serve, blows on the ball. This is the mental visualization technique that McCool was talking about? David means to be a fire-breathing dragon? After a "Let," he loses the point. Again, preparing to serve, he blows on the ball. And again, after a "Let," he loses the point. Enough of that. But at deuce Pazsy fast-serves and crushes a follow. Then finishes, ala his famous countryman of the '70s, by Klamparlo-curling the ball around the net into David's forehand for a game-winner.

Zhuang not only changes ends for the 3rd game, he changes shirts. After getting off to a 5-1 lead, he goes up 7-4 on a flashy crosscourt forehand. Then he forces a sitter, and just as David takes a mighty swing at it, Pazsy leans in close over the table to try to trap the ball and David barely misses decapitating him. "I almost killed you!" he says. The Hungarian gives no ground, never stops attacking, scores on some squat loops. Zhuang's just as aggressive. In the end-game, David's ahead 18-17, but Pazsy's got the serve. After an exchange of points, the Hungarian bench calls "Time!" Pazsy returns, serves into the net! Since such an unforgivable mistake had also happened at a crucial point in Cheng Yinghua's match with Slovakia's Martin, one wonders, when play is interrupted, how often the desired effect is really achieved. Maybe someone's doing a Ph.D. Sports Psychology study on it? From 19-all another exchange of points. Then Zhuang serves and Pazsy errors, mishits the ball. And errors again. David, the deuce-in-the-3rd winner, collapses fiat on his back on court. But not for long. "Wow!" he says on coming back to his bench. After accepting congratulations, he begins to peel the tape off his wrist. "Your wrist o.k.? I ask. "What do you think?" he says. "Everything's o.k. now."

An assessment a bit premature, perhaps—especially when Cheng loses a very anticlimactic 1st game to Fan. On Friday, with the opening of these Championships, Cheng turned 42; Fan is 31. The age difference shows—Cheng is slower to react, has more trouble reaching off-balance for a backhand and getting back into position.

In the 2nd, it's 5-all when Cheng feels Fan has won a point with a double hit—finger and racket. Fan says No, the umpire says No, but Cheng's smile and hesitation to play continue to say otherwise. Next point Fan responds by deliberately mishitting his return....On through the mid-game into the end game they go, with Fan occasionally, on losing a point, letting loose with an exhortation to self. When Fan's backhand-off-the-bounce pick-up brings him to 17-all, and he increases his lead to 19-17, it's "Time!" for Cheng to steady. At 19-all, the Hungarians call "Time!"

Now the crowd begins to clap. There's a big difference between $6,000 and $1,200. In a sense, they're showing appreciation for both teams—for both deserve that, and more. After play resumes, the score becomes deuce and strangely escalates, for from 21-all through 25-all whoever has the serve loses the point. Finally, with the help of a forehead counter and an ad-up serve and follow, Cheng prevails, 28-26. "Whew," says Alan Williams over the mike, "now everybody can breathe."

In the 3rd, Cheng, up 9-5, 12-6, 17-13 is holding his lead. At 17-15 he questions an edge Fan definitely got, and—no freebie this time—Fan flashes out. "Look at the video!" A losing point, and an awkward return by Cheng, should have produced a tie score, but Fan's loop was long—or did it hit? NOOO! Fan, it didn't, chomped a small section of the crowd. No other misses by Fan and Cheng's up 19-16. Then 19-17...19-18. And now Fan gets a big break. The ump doesn't see it, Cheng doesn't see it, but as Fan leans his playing arm on the table to keep his balance on a winning follow through, he moves the table—or at least 1 and others at ringside thought he did (later I checked the table wheels, kicked one, and, sure enough, the other one moved, was unlocked). Fan's winner brings the score to 19-all. Cheng then loops in one of his patented backhands to go match-point up. But the match himself he's not to get, for his try for a winner ticks off the net, and that ad's his last. A big disappointment for the Allstars. Hungary advances to meet CWT in the final.

**FINAL: HUNGARY (3) - CWT (2)**

It's not the table Fan's dissatisfied with as he prepares to open against Wang, it's the net—doesn't it need adjustment? There, that's better—off Fan's serve, Fan's off to a 5-0 start. Then, after being caught at 8-all, he forges ahead again, 12-9. Now, a moment of distraction for Wang—he reaches down, ties the laces to one of his green shoes. Steps back to the table, has a second moment of distraction—serves into the net. Scores only three more points. In the 2nd, Fan's again at 8-all, getting into his backhand-loop mode, and when he's up 15-10 the match seems predictably over. Members of the tournament staff prepare to throw—what? unlit firecrackers?—oh, souvenir water bottles into different sections of the crowd. Wang, however, is not ready for circus comedy—nor is he non-plussed by Fan's sudden Time Out. He wins six in a row, takes a 16-15 lead. Favoring a serve where, standing sideways, he first bounces the ball on the racket, then, on throwing it up, bathes his body forward to make contact, he goes on to twice have the ad. But he can't finish, and CWT has lost its first match of the tournament.

Chen Longcan, playing in the second (which also means the fifth) position, as he did against Slovakia, is going to make quick work of Pazsy?
No, don’t let Chen’s 4-0 start fool you. It is immediately 4-4 and they play even to 18-17. Chen, where, because Chen’s been having trouble with Varga’s serves, and Pazsy’s committed to aggressive serve-and-follows, it’s very much a hit or miss situation for the Hungarian. With Chen leading 20-19, the two warriors play probably the best point of the tournament – a thrilling, hopping corner-to-corner barrage from both sides, punctuated by a superb Chen block and undiminished topspin exchanges. Chen wins this point, and, as if to oblige the cheering crowd, punctuated by a superb Chen block, and undiminished topspin exchanges, leading 20-19, the two warriors play probably the best point of the tournament – a thrusting, hopping corner-to-corner barrage from both sides.

Varga also has a peculiar serve motion: he brings the racket straight up, as if to block the sight of his right eye, then on releasing the ball he comes into it, kicking his left leg back into a footstamp. Twice approaching the end-game, Takashi fails to return serve on releasing the ball he comes into it. kicking his left leg back into a footstamp. Twice approaching the end-game, Takashi failure to return serve.

In the 2nd game, Pazsy begins by long-range rocketing in backhands, goes 9-6 up. But then play becomes a mirror image of the first, and Pazsy is ahead 18-17 having to face Chen’s serve. That’s too much for the Hungarian to handle; he can’t get another point.

The deciding point... At 12-10, Wang, like a swordsman of old, thrusts right, left: the point pierces. A mere flesh wound. Now, though, it’s as if Pazsy is incensed: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 in a row he scores – the last on a vintage Hungarian loop, late-breaking around the net. alley-ooping into the pocket, scattering you would think all of Wang’s hopes. But from 19-13 down he doesn’t give up, nor does he from 20-16 match point down, though Pazsy has the serve, serve, serve, serve. Wang fights magnificently – counters, lunges with a fencer’s grace, devours it. Again Pazsy has the ad. Timed to “Time!”, thunderclaps rumble rhythmically from the audience – they anticipate the end. But Pazsy can’t take advantage of his serve. Worse, he pushes Wang’s serve into the net; but Wang, perhaps overanxious, fails to loop in Pazsy’s serve. At 23-11, the Hungarian fearlessly pounds in a serve return; then serves into the net. Down 26-25, Pazsy rears up and serves into the net. Down 26-25, Pazsy rears up and serves to the net. Again Pazsy has the ad. Timed to “Time!”, thunderclaps rumble rhythmically from the audience – they anticipate the end. But Pazsy can’t take advantage of his serve. Worse, he pushes Wang’s serve into the net.

The Hungarian team is up off their bench, ecstatic. Such an experience is sure to be take-home memorable – the more so because they’ll be accompanied by 1,750,000 Hungarian forints (about $6000). But others, too, from near or far, are gratified that they’ve come to this special tournament. Landau Couch/Manager Ralf Weber said he was pleased to have been a part of it all, and appreciated President Lee’s flexibility in allowing him to last-minute substitute his wife for another player. “This tournament is quite different from those in Europe,” he said. “So many people come and play here – informally. men and women together – and just have fun. That’s great – to play and have fun.”
$64,000 POLISH OPEN
Warsaw, Poland
November 16-19, 2000
Men's Singles – Final: Liu Guozheng (CHN) d. Zoran Primorac (CRO), 10,13,18; SF: Liu d. Jorg Rosskopf (GER), 14,13,18,-12,15; Primorac d. He Zhi Wen (ESP), -16,-18,15,11,14; QF: Rosskopf d. Werner Schlagier (AUT), 14,-13,18,-12,15; Liu d. Johnny Huang (CAN), 12,17,8; Primorac d. Kim Taek Soo (KOR), 15,-17,-17,12,13; He d. Jean-Michel Saive (BEL), -16,-18,15,11,14; 8ths: Rosskopf d. Oh Sang Eun (KOR), 14,11,14; Schlagier d. Christophe Legout (FRA), 22,22,9; Liu d. Fredrik Hakansson (SWE), 15,-13,8,11; Hakan M. Richard Byborny (CZE), -22,-16,-17,18; Kim d. Koji Matsushita (JPN), 12,15,14; Primorac d. Damien Eloi (FRA), 15,-14,15; Saive d. Petr Korbel (CZE), 12,21,17; He d. Vladimir Samsonov (BLR), 19,-13,19,19.

Women's Singles – Final: Zhang Ying (CHN) d. Tamara Boros (CRO), -11,20,20,6; SF: Zhang d. Mihaela Steff (ROM), -22,10,14,-21,16; Boros d. Ruji Jun Hye (KOR), -19,17,-17,22,16; Boros d. Niu Jianfeng (CHN), 17,16,12,22; Steff d. Liu Jia (AUT), -19,17,13,15; Zhang Ying d. Csilla Batorfi (HUN), 16,14,17; 8ths: Ryu d. Viktorija Pavlovich (BLR), 17,14,16; Jing d. Zhang Yingying (CHN), 17,16,12,19; Steff d. Futa Budi Garkauskaitei (LTU), 20,12,10; Liu Jia d. Aya Umemura (JPN), 13,18,11; Batorfi d. Li Jia Wei (SIN), 11,19,21; Zhang Ying d. Otilia Badescu, 12,16,24,10.

Men's Doubles – Final: Ma Lin/Liu Guozheng (CHN) d. Werner Schlager/Karl Jindrak (AUT), 13,18, SF: Schlager/Jindrak d. Chuan Chi Chuan/Chung Chih Yuan (TPE), -22,11,16,22; Ma/Liu d. Kim Taek SOo/Oh Sang Eun (KOR), 15,12,17; Boros d. Niu Jianfeng (CHN), 17,16,12,22; Steff d. Liu Jia (AUT), -19,17,13,15; Zhang Ying d. Csilla Batorfi (HUN), 16,14,17; 8ths: Ryu d. Viktorija Pavlovich (BLR), 17,14,16; Jing d. Zhang Yingying (CHN), 17,16,12,19; Steff d. Futa Budi Garkauskaitei (LTU), 20,12,10; Liu Jia d. Aya Umemura (JPN), 13,18,11; Batorfi d. Li Jia Wei (SIN), 11,19,21; Zhang Ying d. Otilia Badea, 12,16,24,10.

Women's Doubles – Final: Bai Yang/Niu Jianfeng (CHN) d. Mihaela Steff/Otilia Badescu (ROM), 12,13; SF: Steff/Badescu d. Liu Jia/Chun Chih Yuan (TPE), -22,11,16,22; Ma/Liu d. Kim Taek Soo/Oh Sang Eun (KOR), 15,12,17; Boros d. Niu Jianfeng (CHN), 17,16,12,22; Steff d. Liu Jia (AUT), -19,17,13,15; Zhang Ying d. Csilla Batorfi (HUN), 16,14,17; 8ths: Ryu d. Viktorija Pavlovich (BLR), 17,14,16; Jing d. Zhang Yingying (CHN), 17,16,12,19; Steff d. Futa Budi Garkauskaitei (LTU), 20,12,10; Liu Jia d. Aya Umemura (JPN), 13,18,11; Batorfi d. Li Jia Wei (SIN), 11,19,21; Zhang Ying d. Otilia Badea, 12,16,24,10.

$65,000 SWEDISH OPEN
Umea, Sweden
November 23-26, 2000
Men's Singles – Final: Liu Guozheng (CHN) d. Seiko Iseki (JPN), 12, 18, 13; SF: Liu d. Werner Schlager (AUT), 13,14,12; Iseki d. Christophe Legout (FRA), 16,17,11; QF: Liu d. Ma Lin (CHN), 16,21,8; Schlager d. Jorg Rosskopf (GER), -18,16,12,-19,14; Legout d. Chi-Yuan Chuan (TPE), 17,17,10; Iseki d. Magnus Molin (SWE), 19,-13,17,12; 8ths: Ma d. Feng Zhe (CHN), 18,18,16; Liu d. Petr Korbel (CZE), -20,17,16,15; Schlager d. Cheung Yuk (HKG), 17,16,-17,10; Rosskopf d. Jorgen Persson (SWE), -20,17,16,19; Chuan d. Fejer-Konnerz Zoltan (GER), 18,19,-19,15; Legout d. Yoo Seung Min (KOR), 16,-14,-15,18,11; Molin d. Tasaki Toshio (JPN), -19,18,-13,19; Iseki d. Jane- Ove Waldner (SWE), -12,-18,21,7,21.

Women's Singles – Final: Zhang Ying (CHN) d. Takada Joshiie (JPN), 20,-17,15,11; SF: Zhang d. Tamara Boros, (CRO), 16,12,24; Takada d. Niu Jianfeng (CHN), -10,22,14,13; QF: Zhang d. Jing Jun Hing (SIN), 11,14,20; Boros d. Lee Eun Sil (KOR), 11,15,16; Niu d. Michaela Steff (ROM), 24,17,16; Takada d. Akiko Tekeda (JPN), 12,17,14; 8ths: Takada d. Otilia Badea (ROM), -17,19,-12,14; Takada d. Rie Tsjimmoto (JPN), 21,12,18; Niu d. Asa Svensson (SWE), 12,19,19; Steff d. Kwok Fong Fong (HKG), 17,11,10,14; Boros d. Bai Yang (CHN), 18,14,18; Lee d. Elke Schall (GER), -14,19,20,-18,16; Jing d. Lau Sui Fei (HKG), 9,-14,16,20; Zhang d. Okazaki Keiko (JPN), 10,22,14.

Men's Doubles – Final: Ma Lin/Liu Guozheng (CHN) d. Toshio Tasaki/Seiko Iseki (JPN), 5,11; SF: Ma/Liu d. Yoo Seung Min/Le Chul Seung (KOR), 20,-9,18; Niu d. Ki Taek Soo/Oh Sang Eun (KOR), -18,15,11; QF: Ma/Liu d. Werner Schlager/Danny Heister (GER), 17,11,15; Steff d. Akiko Tekeda (JPN), 12,17,14; 8ths: Takada d. Otilia Badea, 17,19,-12,14; Takada d. Rie Tsjimmoto (JPN), 21,12,18; Niu d. Asa Svensson (SWE), 12,19,19; Steff d. Kwok Fong Fong (HKG), 17,11,10,14; Boros d. Bai Yang (CHN), 18,14,18; Lee d. Elke Schall (GER), -14,19,20,-18,16; Jing d. Lau Sui Fei (HKG), 9,-14,16,20; Zhang d. Okazaki Keiko (JPN), 10,22,14.

Women's Doubles – Final: Ma Lin/Liu Guozheng (CHN) d. Toshio Tasaki/Seiko Iseki (JPN), 5,11; SF: Ma/Liu d. Yoo Seung Min/Le Chul Seung (KOR), 20,-9,18; Niu d. Ki Taek Soo/Oh Sang Eun (KOR), -18,15,11; QF: Ma/Liu d. Werner Schlager/Danny Heister (GER), 17,11,15; Steff d. Akiko Tekeda (JPN), 12,17,14; 8ths: Takada d. Otilia Badea, 17,19,-12,14; Takada d. Rie Tsjimmoto (JPN), 21,12,18; Niu d. Asa Svensson (SWE), 12,19,19; Steff d. Kwok Fong Fong (HKG), 17,11,10,14; Boros d. Bai Yang (CHN), 18,14,18; Lee d. Elke Schall (GER), -14,19,20,-18,16; Jing d. Lau Sui Fei (HKG), 9,-14,16,20; Zhang d. Okazaki Keiko (JPN), 10,22,14.
**INTERNATIONAL**

**$135,000 MEN'S WORLD CUP**
Yangzhou, China • October 12-15, 2000

**Final:** Ma Lin (CHN) d. Kim Taeck Soo (KOR), 10,13,9; SF: Ma d. Wang Liqin (CHN), 17,14,14; Kim d. Jean-Michel Saive (BEL), 13,13,15; QF: Wang d. Saive, -19,13,16; Ma d. Jorgen Persson (SWE), 15,-19,11; Wang d. Chiang Peng-Lung (TPE), 14,-17,14,21; Kim d. Peter Karlsson (SWE), 16,17,-14,15; Saive d. Zoran Primorac (CRO), -17,14,18,17.

**Preliminaries:**

**Group A:** 1st Zoran Primorac (CRO), 3-0 (d. Kong, 9,14; d. Chiang, 12,-18,16; d. Hoyama, 18,11); 2nd Chiang Peng-Lung (TPE), 2-1 (d. Kong, 22,14; d. Hoyama, 11,21); 3rd Kong Linghui, 1-2 (d. Hoyama, 15,14); 4th Hugo Hoyama (BRA), 0-3.

**Group B:** 1st Wang Liqin (CHN), 3-0 (d. Schlager, 16,19; d. Saive, 17,14; d. Nguyen, 11,12); 2nd Jean-Michel Saive (BEL), 2-1 (d. Schlager, 15,20; d. Nguyen, 7,13); 3rd Werner Schlager (AUT), 1-2 (d. Nguyen, 19,11); 4th Khoa Nguyen (USA), 0-3.

**Group C:** 1st Kim Taeck Soo (KOR), 3-0 (d. Samsonov, -19,19,18; d. Persson, 11,-6,19; d. Lasgin, 13,10); 2nd Jorgen Persson (SWE), 2-1 (d. Samsonov, -9,15,12; d. Lasgin, 2-0); 3rd Vladimir Samsonov (BLR), 1-2 (d. Lasgin, 11,16); 4th El-Say Lasgin (EGY), 0-3.

**Group D:** 1st Ma Lin (CHN), 3-0 (d. Waldner, 17,14; d. Karlsson, 15,14; d. Gerada, 12,10); 2nd Peter Karlsson (SWE), 2-1 (d. Waldner, -21,19,18; d. Gerada, 19,17); 3rd Jan-Ove Waldner (SWE), 1-2 (d. Gerada, 19,17); 4th Simon Gerada (AUS), 0-3.

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**SMACK & PACK TEAM TOURNAMENT**
Billings, MT • Sept. 2-3, 2000

By Ramona Doll

Team Champion Mark Nordby

Thanks to our sponsors Best Western Ponderosa Inn and Deaconess Billings Clinic, we were able to put up some good prize money and attract some great players to our Smack & Pack Team Tournament in Billings, MT. There was great play and lots of close matches during the Labor Day weekend tournament. Nobody wanted to miss watching the top two seeded teams face each other in the final round: Nordby/Oros vs. St. Germain/Benton.

They did not let us down. The first match was between top seed Mark Nordby of Chicago and Timothy St. Germain of Colorado Springs. The first game went to deuce with Mark winning, 22-20. Mark won the second as well, 21-15. The second match was between John Oros of Moline, IL and Eric Benton of Colorado Springs. Eric was victorious, at 14 & 19. Nordby/Oros then won the doubles at 19 & 16. It was now up to Eric to keep his team alive against Nordby in the fourth match. The first game was close the entire way, with Mark coming out victorious, 21-19. Eric took a quick 6-1 lead in the second game. Mark came back on his serve to 6-4, and kept it close until near the end – but Eric won, 21-15. By the third and final game the pressure had radiated out to the fans, and even their nerves were on edge. After many great serves, loops and blocks by both players, Mark came out on top, 21-15. Third place went to Bill Ryan and Dallas Redekopp, who made a great run at second place, taking Tim and Eric the full five matches.

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**13TH WORLD UNIVERSITY TABLE TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS**
Shanghai, China • October 30, 2000

**Men’s Team:** 1st Chinese Taipei; 2nd China; 3-4: France & Japan.

**Women’s Team:** 1st China; 2nd Korea; 3-4: France & Japan.

**Men’s Singles:** 1st Liu Guozheng (CHN); 2nd Chuang Chin-Yuan (TPE); 3-4: Xi Minjie (CHN) & Wang Liqin (CHN).

**Women’s Singles:** 1st Cheng Hongxia (CHN); 2nd Sun Jin (CHN); 3-4: Yu Jingwei (CHN) & Tie Yana (CHN).

**Men’s Doubles:** 1st Chiang Peng-Lung/Chang Yen-Shu (TPE); 2nd Chuang Chin-Yuan/Kuo Chih-Hsiang (TPE); 3-4: Liu Guozheng/Zhang Yong (CHN) & Wang Liqin/Xi Minjie (CHN).

**Women’s Doubles:** 1st Sun Jin/Tie Yana (CHN); 2nd Yu Jingwei/Cheng Hongxia (CHN); 3-4: Tsui Hsiu-Li/Chen Chi-Tan (TPE) & Nicole Delle/Tanja Riss (GER).

**Mixed Doubles:** 1st Wang Liqin/Sun Jin (CHN); 2nd Zhang Yingjie/Tie Yana (CHN); 3-4: Gerd Richter/Tanja Riss (GER) & Liu Guozheng/Yu Jingwei (CHN).
LAKE HAVASU OPEN
Lake Havasu City, AZ • Sept. 16-17, 2000
By Alan Newman

Lake Havasu City continues to bring big money and big fun to Southwestern table tennis. The 5th Annual Lake Havasu Open was held September 16-17 in the auditorium of the Aquatic Center. Over one hundred participants competed in 22 events for a total purse of $2,150.

All singles events were round robin, and all rated singles events, even down to the Under 1000’s, featured cash prizes and trophies. Two local papers covered the tournament, as did the local television station.

The new 40mm ball was used for the hardbat event, creating a hybrid of the new and the old. Despite some grumbles before play started, the new ball was readily accepted and hardly noticed once the games got under way.

The final of this year’s Open Championship featured Attila Malek against Tuan Le. Malek, out of practice after surgery, lost in an exciting four-game match to Le’s speed and power. Malek evened the score, however, by winning Open Doubles with partner Courtney Roberts against Le and Nick Mintsiveris.

“We’re thrilled that we keep getting the best players in the Southwest for this event,” said club president John Ballard. “They show us another level that we don’t see around here every day.”

The Women’s Singles champion was Alina Khasanova over Phoenix’s Huiping Fuschino. In junior singles, Khasanova took second to Michael Amiren.

Local high school student Devin Wiley, 16, showed that his table tennis game is steadily improving as he won the Under 1150 singles event. Wiley has been playing in the Lake Havasu club for the past four years and his game looks ready to go to new heights.

“Devin’s got the form and the power,” said coach Paul Campbell. “When he gets consistency we’ll all have to watch out.”

Other juniors also had fine performances in the tournament. Michael Amiren, who also won the junior event, won Under 1750 singles over Chasen Koh. Peter Randall won Under 1400 singles over fellow junior Christian Panescu.

Another Malek family member placed very well in the tournament. Scott Malek, who may have learned a thing or two from his father, won Under 1900 singles.

Two events which were not won by juniors were the Under 1000 and Under 1300 events. Walter Baier won Under 1000 over Vernon Myers, then took second to Bill Cantor in Under 1300 singles.

Winning Under 1600 and placing second in Over 60 doubles was part of a memorable tournament for Alex Horvath. Later, with partner Jesus Sanchez, he won Under 3500 doubles over the Attila Malek-coached team of Michael Amiren and Scott Malek.

One competitor, Barry Meisel, now living in Spain, arranged his American vacation to coincide with visiting Lake Havasu and the tournament. It was a good idea for him, too, as he won three events: Open Singles, Over 60 Singles, and Over 60 Doubles.

Hard work, community support and competitive table tennis once again made the Lake Havasu Open a great success. At least 50 local individuals and businesses contributed sponsorships or donations to make the tournament possible.

Thanks to lead sponsor Barnacle Bill’s Boat Rentals and Repairs; Paddle Palace; Nittaku: Big John’s Steak ‘N Pub; Windsor Inn Motel; Lake Havasu Parks and Recreation; Bradley Ford – Lincoln – Mercury; Suzannah Ballard, realtor; Mohave State Bank; Nationwide Homes, Inc.; Ramada Inn; Holiday Inn; Coldwell Banker, The Judd Group; and Nicolin’s Restaurants.

Open Singles: 1st Tuan Le; 2nd Attila Malek; 3rd Loc Ngo.

Open Doubles: 1st Attila Malek/Courtney Roberts; 2nd Tuan Le/Nick Mintsiveris.

Women’s Singles: 1st Alina Khasanova; 2nd Huiping Fuschino.

Over 40: 1st Barry Meisel; 2nd Alex Lai.

Over 50: 1st Vincent McMenamy; 2nd Chason Koh.

Over 60: 1st Barry Meisel; 2nd Vincent McMenamy.

Over 40 Doubles: 2nd Robert Bryant Jr./Simen Potock; 3rd Ragnar Fahlstrom/Mark Morris.

Over 60 Doubles: 1st Barry Meisel/Vincent McMenamy; 2nd Alex Horvath/Nick Mintsiveris.

Under 18: 1st Michael Amiren; 2nd Alina Khasanova.

U1900: 1st Scott Malek; 2nd Brian Briscoe.

U1750: 1st Michael Amiren; 2nd Chason Koh.

U1600: 1st Alex Horvath; 2nd Brent Saunders.

U1500: 1st Franz Schauer; 2nd Peter Randall.

U1400: 1st Christian Panescu; 2nd Violet Bloom.

U1300: 1st Bill Cantor; 2nd Walter Baier.

U1150: 1st Devin Wiley; 2nd Walter Baier.

Under 1300 Finalist Walter Baier, R&R Coins Owner and Tournament Sponsor Richard Dashieill, and Under 1300 Champion Bill Cantor.

U1000: 1st Walter Baier; 2nd Vernon Myers.

Unrated: 1st Dorothy Morel; 2nd Neil Hock.

Hardbat: 1st Loc Ngo; 2nd Tuan Le.

Draw Doubles: 1st Mike Fuschino/Hsing Kiang; 2nd Derrick Cone/Oen/Ozment.

U2800 Doubles: 1st Leszek Kasowski/Winston Ngai; 2nd Gary Romig/Tim Wright.

U3500 Doubles: 1st Alex Horvath/Jesus Sanchez; 2nd Scott Malek/Michael Amiren.

CHICAGO PINGPONG
2000 FESTIVAL RR OPEN
Chicago, IL • Sept. 22, 2000
By Primo Madrigal

The format was ten groups with eight players in each group, played on 20 quality Sears Brand PingPong tables. The place was the huge Great Hall of Chicago’s Union Station. For this tournament we used the software program developed by Karl Mikeseell, a lifetime USATT member and president of Multisymmetric, Inc. Phil Moy, a top sales man for IBM, provided the quality control. The program proved to be very efficient. Many, many thanks to the City of Chicago for promoting the PingPong Festival throughout the city. Special thanks goes to Margarette Tully and Claire Geoff of the Chicago Cultural Affairs. These two wonderful ladies did a magnificent job to make the event a huge success. Also, our thanks to Sears, Escalade Sports, Electronic Knowledge Interchange and USA Table Tennis as sponsors. Last, but not least, thanks to the volunteers like Dr. Masakatsu Goto, Chuning Gao, Tony and Sandy Gutierrez, Naveel Nazar, Andy Moy, Sam Rogers, Danny Dugenia, Jonathan Kittner Sr., Reggie Madrigal and others I failed to mention.


Most Valuable Player Award: Maria Kretschmer.
**VERMONT FALL FOLIAGE OPEN**

**Windsor, Vermont • Oct. 14, 2000**

**By Doug Haynes**

14-year-old Yin Wang, the top junior in New England, took the $200 first prize in the Vermont Fall Foliage Open at Windsor, VT, Oct. 14th. Yin defeated Lennox Douglas two straight in the final after having lost to Douglas in an earlier round robin group. Two advanced from each group, however, and Yin defeated Dzenan Karabegovic, a first-time USA TT tournament player from Bosnia, in one of the semifinals. Douglas then beat Danya Budiman in three games in the other semifinal, setting up a rematch. Exhausted from a series of eleven matches over the previous six hours – he had already won the under 2000s – Douglas could not muster his earlier form, and succumbed easily to Yin’s steady looping game.

14-year-old Mike Caplan of Cohoes, NY was the perhaps most successful player of the day. Rated 910 going into the tournament, he won the under 1200s and came in second in both the 1400s and 1600s. Observers were torn over whether he or Lennox Douglas was the most underrated participant present. (Two days after the tournament an updated rating from the Garden State Open put Capian over 1300!) Caplan and Yin were among a large number of high caliber players under 16 years of age who attended. Junior table tennis certainly appears to be on the rise in the region!

Tournament organizers observed an interesting response to the rule changes concerning ball size, which had come into effect only two weeks earlier. The tournament was played with the smaller 38mm ball, and drew even more under 2000 players than usual. On the other hand, most of the top players stayed away, having already made the transition to the big ball, and only one competitor over 2000 entered. Hopefully, by the time of our Spring tournament, most players in the region will have made the transition to the big ball and we will be able to once again attract many of the strongest competitors in New England.

**Open:** 1” Yin Wang; 2” Lennox Douglas; 3-4: Dzenan Karabegovic, Danya Budiman.

**U2000:** 1” Lennox Douglas; 2” Budiman.

**U1800:** 1” Howe Yu; 2” Mark Hamilton.

**U1600:** 1” Luke Malone; 2” Mike Caplan.

**U1400:** 1” Peter Kawecki; 2” Mike Caplan.

**U1200:** 1” Mike Caplan; 2” Mark Corrao.

**U1000:** 1” Mike Pfeif; 2” Kevin O’Neill.

**U850:** 1” Tim Ferris; 2” Trevor Bougill.

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**CONCORD CUP YOUTH OPEN**

**Concord, CA • October 8, 2000**

**By Philip Schafur**

A record 61 players entered the 2000 Concord Cup Youth Open table tennis tournament, easily exceeding the previous high mark of 41. The large field was particularly impressive, given that it was limited to players under age 22. In addition to San Francisco area juniors, the tournament attracted two players from Milwaukee, OR and a member of the Montenegro Girls’ National Junior Team, here as an exchange student. The One-Star event was held on October 8, 2000 in Pleasant Hill, CA at the Pleasant Hill Christian School gym, the Concord Table Tennis Club’s home facility.

The Club Competition Trophy was won by the Sunset Club (San Francisco) whose nine players amassed seven firsts, one second and eight semifinalist spots to earn 132.5 points. The Palo Alto Club finished second with 116 points for its two firsts, 2½ seconds and seven semifinalist finishes from its 16 players. The host Concord Club’s 18 entrants earned third place with 95 points; many of its players were in their first tournament. Other clubs included Oakland (39 points, 2 players), Daly City (38 points, 8 players), Milwaukee, OR (seven points, two players) and Fairfield (three points, one player).

This was the first year for the Club Competition Trophy. The concept promotes club-to-club competition with the long-term objectives of establishing friendly rivalries and instilling organizational pride. Clubs earn points based upon their players’ performances; each first place earns 10 points, second 7 points, semifinalist four points and one point for other finishes.

Outstanding individual performances were turned in by Neda Milacic, a Montenegro Girls’ National Junior Team member, with firsts in Under 1750 and Under 4000 Doubles, plus second place finishes in the Open and Under 2000; and the Sunset Club’s John Springer, first in Under 500 and Under 1000. Top-seeded Freddie Gabriel easily defeated Milacic (12:12) to collect the Open’s $75 first-place award.

Support from the City of Concord and the California Sports Foundation through Ed Heinrich was a key element in helping the host Concord Club make this event a success. With their assistance, we were able to offer a combination of a high-quality facility, low entry fees ($20 for 4 events!), a tournament program and free t-shirts. The Concord Club’s 26 years of tournament experience combined with the time and skill contributions of its members were evident in the smoothness of the operation.

**Open:** 1” Freddie Gabriel; 2” Neda Milacic; 3rd Ngai Chi Chung; 4th Wallace Liu.

**U2000:** 1” Alison Seibel; 2” Neda Milacic.

**U1750:** 1” Neda Milacic; 2” Vincent Cheng.

**U1500:** 1” Kevin Phung; 2” Naaman Ho.

**U1250:** 1” Naaman Ho; 2” Atha Fong.

**U1000:** 1” John Springer; 2” Calvin Lo.

**U750:** 1” Calvin Lo; 2” David Leong.

**U500:** 1” John Springer; 2” Calvin Lo.

**U250:** 1” Edward Wong; 2” Margot Leong.

**U4000 Doubles:** 1” Milacic/Li; 2” Cheng/Chung.

**U2700 Doubles:** Ho/Young; 2” Fong/Chung.

**U1400 Doubles:** Rivera/Young; 2” Lam/Yick.

**Club Competition:** 1” SF Sunset; 2” Palo Alto; 3” Concord; 4” No Club; 5” Oakland; 6” Daly City; 7” Portland; 8” Fairfield.
USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE • January/February 2001

2000 MILL CREEK OPEN
Erie, PA • October 21-22, 2000
By Sam Steiner

A total of 107 players participated in this year’s tournament, including three whose mailed entries never arrived, creating additional challenges for the tournament staff. While we had fewer entries rated over 2400 than in past years, nevertheless the battle for the Open was a closely contested affair. Dan Seemiller’s pupil Mark Hazinski, seeded 3rd, triumphed over Randy Seemiller, 21-19 in the 5th, to take the top money. Dan’s South Bend student Eli Kahn, Jeff Smith, and Andy Cochran all had good tournaments as well and took home trophies.

Also notable was the Under 1000 event where Ivan Mast’s young kids Michael and Jennifer outlasted 15 other players to reach the finals. They played an excellent match with Michael mainly attacking and Jennifer mainly blocking, won by Michael, 2-1.

We mourned the absence of long-time competitor and friend Chuck Gorchuck of Buffalo, who passed away recently of a heart attack.

Thanks to everyone who supported the tournament with entries and/or sponsorship.

Open – Final RR: 1st Mark Hazinski, 3-0 (d. D. Seemiller, -16,-8,16,19,21; d. R. Seemiller, 6-18,16,-18,19; d. Baikov, 3-0); 2nd Dan Seemiller, 2-1 (d. R. Seemiller, 14,11,16; d. Baikov, 11,11,13); 3rd Randy Seemiller, 1-2 (d. Baikov, 17,14,10); 4th Dimitri Baikov, 0-3.

Open Warm-up – Group Winners: Dan Seemiller, Mark Hazinski, Bob Powell, Mark Nordby.

Over 40: Dan Seemiller d. Bob Powell, 18,16.
U1600: Mike Halliday d. Eli Kahn, 17,10.
U1500: Rob Billington d. Philip Zhang, 11,-16,11.
U1400: Matt Rustamov d. Kevin Knowles, 20,16.
U1200: Chien Shiek d. Bob DeWitt, 14,11.
U3400 Doubles: Chris Mallis/Jon O'Donnell d. Felix Lai/Kan Tam, 17,16.
U3000 Doubles: Mark Hazinski/Jeff Smith d. Joe Grandalski/Greg Solty, 16,-9,12.

WILLOUGHBY HILLS OPEN
Willoughby, Ohio • Sept. 16-17, 2000
By Robert Harvaster

32 USATT members met with an additional 16 residents of NE Ohio and NW Pennsylvania in the Willoughby Hills Giant Round Robin Open.

John Ginther of Akron went undefeated to take first place in the community robin round. Eric Hausman of Cleveland Heights took second with only a loss to Ginther. The brother/sister combo of Michael and Jennifer Mast showed sound strokes in the dual for third, with Michael besting his sister, this time. Watch for these names in future tournaments.

The second event, Under 1500, came down to a dual in the last round of unbeaten players, the favorite Philip Zhang of Willoughby Hills, and Matt Rustomov of South Euclid. After losing the first, Matt came back to win two straight close games for first place. Amanda Dubina took third. One of the more exiting matches of this round was between Amanda and her father, Sam. Amanda showed little respect for her father’s drives to her forehand, and consistently smashed them right back at him. All was forgiven when, after the match, the winner Amanda gave dad a big hug and a kiss on the cheek. Both open events of the weekend were won by Samson Dubina (Yes, Sam’s son and Amanda’s brother – a very nice but confusing table tennis family). Samson, who was recently featured in an interview by Paddle Palace, went undefeated in the tournament, although there were a couple of hard-fought matches where Samson lost a game. One, to Ivan Mast (Jennifer and Michael’s father), who took second place on Saturday, and one to our local “young lion,” Eric Leventhal. Eric went undefeated in the Open until he met Samson, and was then defeated by John Taylor of Cleveland to slip to third place. Eric had previously defeated John in the Open event on Saturday and probably raised his rating considerably with victories over two 1800+ and two 1700+ players. Rick Aker of Canton took third in Saturday’s Open event.

The Over 1500 event was won with another undefeated performance by Dave Berenson, followed by John Taylor and then Carlton Robinson.

The Lake/Geauga TTC wishes to thank all the participants and those who helped make our first tournament a success.

CHARLOTTE OPEN
Charlotte, NC • Oct. 21, 2000
By John Pahl

The 3rd Annual Charlotte Open drew 30 players, mostly from North & South Carolina. Nigel Christopher swept through his groups without dropping a game to pick up 1st place and $50 prize money. Classes B through E were won by Rene Harres, Ray Filz, Francis Kovach and Jay Nisenbaum. A Division Doubles paired the top eight players by rating, while the rest of the group paired to make the B Division. Special mention goes to Ray Filz for winning 6 of his 7 victories over higher rated opponents. CTTC supplied pizza for lunch, keeping the players and eight tables busy all day. Thanks to Tom Miller for keeping everybody playing and to Paddle Palace for their support. CTTC welcomes new members Milind & Swati Phadke, Ira Goodman, Ray Schaeffer, Ray Filz & Mike Gee. See you in Spring, 2001.

Division A: 1st Nigel Christopher; 2nd Sven Mestchen; 3rd Guillermo Rosales.
Division B: 1st Rene Harres; 2nd Steve Sebastian.
Division C: 1st Ray Filz; 2nd William Collier.
Division D: 1st Francis Kovach; 2nd Mark Magitman.
Division E: 1st Jay Nisenbaum; 2nd Ed Levy.
Division A Doubles: 1st Guillermo Rosales/Tim Connolly; 2nd Nigel Christopher/Dariusz Czarnocki.
**Syracuse Giant Round RR**

The tournament had an excellent turnout, despite the extensive coverage provided by NBC of Olympic Table Tennis. Once again the central location of Syracuse attracted competitive players from the Four Corners of upstate New York as well as Canada and Pennsylvania. Terence Kalicharan returned and defended his Open title without losing a match again. Perhaps the introduction of the 40mm ball may change that next year. The Syracuse Club wishes to thank all the players who attended our tournament. We look forward to seeing all of you again next year.

**Waco Summer Round Robin**

The Waco Summer Round Robin was held in Waco, Texas on August 26, 2000. It was a successful tournament with competitive play throughout.

**SDTTA Hosts U.S. Olympic Team Luncheon**

The USA Olympic Team, along with its coaches and team manager, arrived in San Diego on August 27, 2000 to commence final tune-up and training for the 2000 Games. On August 28, the SDTTA and the Barona Indian Casino hosted a welcoming luncheon for the team, media, San Diego Table Tennis Association (SDTTA) club members and their families. One hundred and fifty people attended the gala luncheon in the beautiful garden patio of the Balboa Park Activity Center, home of the San Diego club. The facility is considered the finest in North America and possibly the world with its 20 tables, wood floors, perfect lighting and thirty foot ceilings. With San Diego’s perfect year-round weather, no heating or air conditioning is necessary, avoiding any interference with the ball from air currents.

Prior to the luncheon, the team’s first training session was held. Two of the network television stations were busy filming the action with in-depth coverage and interviews done by our local CBS station, thanks to Kathy Chinn, a thirty-year member of the club.

Goodie bags, put together by the SDTTA and Barona Casino, were presented to each member of the team, including the coaches and team manager. Neil Smyth handled the introduction of the U.S. Olympic Team Members: Chang Gao Jun, Jasna Reed, Tawny Bunn, Michelle Do, Cheng Yinghua, David Zhuang, Todd Sweeris, Khoa Nguyen, Men’s Coach Dan Seemiller, Women’s Coach Doru Kleinhammer; 3rd Dave Lawrence; 4th Jerry Fuller.

Class A Doubles: 1stTerence Kalicharan; 2nd Charles Shaw; 3rd Richard Grant; 4th Jerry Fuller.

Class B Doubles: 1st Raymond Fund; 2nd Tony Hargita; 3rd James Shope; 4th Wickrama Ariyesinghe.

Class C Doubles: 1st Dan Rodriguez; 2nd David Living; 3rd Edita Mathur; 4th Wally Deveraux.

Class D Doubles: 1st James Powell; 2nd Charles Shaw; 3rd Richard Grant; 4th Jerry Fuller.

Class A Doubles: 1st Terence Kalicharan; 2nd Richard Grant; 3rd Jerry Fuller.

Class B Doubles: 1st Euanic Ahsan/Chang Chang; 2nd Raymond Fung/Kenneth Ngai.

Class C Doubles: 1st Dan Rodriguez/Dela Rosa Faustino; 2nd Jaime Powell/Wally Deveraux.

Class D Doubles: 1st Jerry Fuller/Shun Au Young; 2nd Robert Gault/David Living.
### TOP 40 MEN

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**TOURNAMENTS PROCESSED**

This list was compiled on 12/7/00 and includes all tournaments played through 11/4/2000. Due to space limitations, only current members who have played in a tournament since 7/15/00 are included. This document may not be reproduced without prior written permission of USA Table Tennis. Copyright 2000.

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**TOURNAMENTS INCLUDED IN RATINGS**

- Maryland August Circuit
- 2000 Decatur Open
- Maryland September Circuit
- Maryland Spring Circuit
- Credit Union Open
- Arkansas Open
- Florida State Closed
- Cincinnati Giant RR Big Ball Open
- Tennis Fitness Player Series
- Fall Still Small Ball Open
- Spearhead Open
- Three Rivers TTC Fall Open
- Championship Series
- High Desert Open
- Three Rivers TTC Fall Open
- BumperNets November Open
- Fall Still Small Ball Open
- Spearhead Open
- Three Rivers TTC Fall Open
- Midwest and Illinois Closed
- Georgia Games
- Daly City Mayoral Trophy TTT
- South Bend Summer Open
- Show-Me State Games TTT
- Junior National
- Junior Teams
- Junior Olympics
- Kentucky State Games
- Sports Fitness Series
- Ann Van Voonen
- St. Louis Gateway Open
- MTTC 2000 Open
- BumperNets August Open
- Sunbelt Team
- Maryland September Circuit
- Ralph Robinson Memorial RR
- Pacific Coast Open
- BumperNets September Open
- Carry Nation Open TTT
- Willoughby Hills Giant RR Open
- Lake Havasu Open
- Chicago Ping Pong 2000
- Maryland Sept Circuit Teams
- 2000 Kansas Early Fall 40mm
- Syracuse Giant RR
- MATT September Open
- STTC Open Sept 2000 Circuit
- Davison September Open
- Sacramento Fall Fun For All TTT
- 2000 Indianapolis Fall Open
- Western Open
- Sports Fitness Player Series
- South Bend Fall Open
- Concord Cup Youth Open TTT
- Huntsman World Senior Games
- Vermont Peak Fall Foliage Open
- Arkansas Fall Closed
- 15th Annual Bernard Hock Open
- Maryland October Circuit
- Colorado Springs Open
- Fall Still Small Ball Open TTT
- T-Tonics Classics
- 2000 Charlotte Open
- Tri-City Open Fall Double RR
- Southern Open
- Best of the West Open
- 2000 Millicreek Open
- 2000 Music City Open
- Maryland October Circuit Teams
- Cincinnati Giant RR Big Ball Open
- Schaumburg First Big Ball RR
- Davison October Open
- Huntington Fall 2000 Open
- MATT October Open
- South Florida TTC
- Sports Fitness Player Series
- Three Rivers TTC Fall Open
- BumperNets November Open
- Sligo Pacific Rim Open
- High Desert Open

All ratings-related questions should be directed to Tami Walker, 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.
Players' favorite source

USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE • January/February 2001

1-800-547-5891

Players' favorite source for table tennis supplies
January 13-14 - MATTC January Open, Middletown, PA. Contact: Don Vantine, 231 Oak Hill Drive, Middletown, PA 17057. Phone: 717-944-7154 ★★ Vas53@aol.com


January 21, 2001 - Lincoln Open, Lincoln, NE. Contact: Jarry Petterton, 505 W. 1111 Box 354, Ceresco, NE 68017. Phone: 402-665-5681. Ceresco.ett@juno.com


January 7-March 11 - City of Atlanta Junior League Closed, Atlanta, GA. Contact: Ralph L. Pressley, 2404 Sandfall St., Atlanta, GA 30331-8472. Phone: 404-344-4728. Rampresley@aol.com

February 3-4 - Maryland February Circuit, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne Kronlage, 14160 Forsythe Rd., Sykesville, MD 21784. Phone: 410-489-7291.

February 3-4 - Orlando Winter Open, Orlando, FL. Contact: Olga Soltzes 1739 Shady Ridge Ct., Orlando, FL 32807. Phone 407-830-4009 ★★

February 10-11 - MDTTC February Open, Gaithersburg, MD. Contact: Wei Xiao, 18761-Q Frederick Rd., Gaithersburg, MD 20879. Phone: 202-927-1958. Weixiao42@hotmail.com★

February 11-14 - MIT Millennium +1 Spring Open Table Tennis Tournament, Cambridge, MA. Contact: David Marcus, 25 Beacon St., Apt. 16, Somerville, MA. Phone: 781-205-7185. Davidmarcus@alum.mit.edu

February 10-11, 2001 - MDTTC February Open, Gaithersburg, MD. Contact: Wei Xiao, 18761-Q Frederick Rd., Gaithersburg, MD 20879. Phone: 202-927-1958. Weixiao42@hotmail.com★


February 24 - Maryland February Circuit Giant RR, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne Kronlage, 14160 Forsythe Rd., Sykesville, MD 21784. Phone: 410-489-7291.

March 3, 2001 - March Madness Canton Open, Canton, OH. Contact: Terri Weaver 317 Carrolldale S.E., Canton, OH 44207. Phone: 330-488-0637

March 10, 2001 - Atlanta Giant RR, Atlanta, GA. Contact: Wendell Dillon 662 dorsey Circle, Lilburn, GA 30047-4037 Phone: 404-639-3351. Pong35@mindspring.com★

March 10-11 - Maryland March Closed Championships, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne Kronlage, 14160 Forsythe Rd., Sykesville, MD 21784. Phone: 410-489-7291.

March 17, 2001 - Buckeye Open 2001, Columbus, OH. Contact: Steve Slaback, 697 Waxwing Ct, Westerville, OH. 43082. Phone: 614-899-1415. Sslaback@columbus.com ★★★★

March 24 - Maryland March Circuit Giant RR, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne Kronlage, 14160 Forsythe Rd., Sykesville, MD 21784. Phone: 410-489-7291.

March 30-April 1, 2001 - ACUI Championships and NCTTA Finals (proposed), Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD. ACUI Contact: Hank McCoulum (hmw1@psu.edu, 814-238-7962); NCTTA Contact: Richard Lee (rlee@natetabletennis.com, 410-695-2587).

April 7-9, 2001 - MDTTC April Open, Gaithersburg, MD. Contact: Wei Xiao, 18761-Q Frederick Rd., Gaithersburg, MD 20879. Phone: 202-927-1958. Weixiao42@hotmail.com★

April 14 - MIT Millennium +1 Spring Open Table Tennis Tournament, Cambridge, MA. Contact: David Marcus, 25 Beacon St., Apt. 16, Somerville, MA. Phone: 781-205-7185. Davidmarcus@alum.mit.edu

April 21-22 - Maryland April Circuit, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne Kronlage, 14160 Forsythe Rd., Sykesville, MD 21784. Phone: 410-489-7291.

April 21-22 - Tri-city Open Spring Double Round Robin, Richland, WA. Contact: Kirby Parker, 2304 Snohomish Ave., Richland, WA 99352. Phone: 509-375-1587. SLVRFOX@owt.com★

April 28 - Maryland April Circuit Giant RR, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne Kronlage, 14160 Forsythe Rd., Sykesville, MD 21784. Phone: 410-489-7291.

May 5-6 - Maryland May Circuit, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne Kronlage, 14160 Forsythe Rd., Sykesville, MD 21784. Phone: 410-489-7291.

May 12 - The Fourth Annual Maryland Medalion Championship, Frostburg, MD. Contact: C. James Williams, P.O. Box 327. Frostburg, MD 21532-0327. Cjwms@mindspring.com★

May 12 - 4rd Annual Maryland Medalion Championship, Frostburg, MD. Contact: C. James Williams, P.O. Box 327, Frostburg, MD 21532. Phone: 301-689-9941. Cjwms@mindspring.com★

May 26 - Maryland May Circuit Giant RR, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne Kronlage, 14160 Forsythe Rd., Sykesville, MD 21784. Phone: 410-489-7291.


June 16, 2001 - MDTTC October Open, Gaithersburg, MD. Contact: Wei Xiao, 18761-Q Frederick Rd., Gaithersburg, MD 20879. Phone: 202-927-1958. Weixiao42@hotmail.com★

June 23 - Maryland June Circuit Giant RR, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne Kronlage, 14160 Forsythe Rd., Sykesville, MD 21784. Phone: 410-489-7291.

July 4-8 - US Open / ITTF Pro Tour, Ft. Lauderdale, FL. Contact: USA Table Tennis, 719-578-4583. Usatt4@jex.net★★★★★


July 28 - Maryland July Circuit Giant RR, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne Kronlage, 14160 Forsythe Rd., Sykesville, MD 21784. Phone: 410-489-7291.

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

August 18-19 - Macy Block Open, Pittsburgh, PA. Contact: Dan Seemiller, P.O. Box 608, New Carlisle, IN 46552. Phone: 219-654-7476. ★★★★

USA TOURNAMENT RESULTS

MICHIGAN AUGUST OPEN
Davison, MI • August 26, 2000
Open: 1st Samson Dubina; 2nd Dennis Cobb; 3rd Scott Endicott; 4th Yi Liu.
U2200: 1st Dennis Cobb; 2nd Samson Dubina; 3rd Scott Endicott; 4th Yi Liu.
U2000: 1st Sid Stewart; 2nd William Casey.
U1850: 1st Alonzo Edwards; 2nd William Casey.
U1650: 1st Mike Ward; 2nd Charles Sherman.
U1500: 1st Gary Travis; 2nd Roy Brim.
U1350: 1st Methuselah Murray; 2nd Mike Pollack.
U1200: 1st Bill Wyant; 2nd Ron Benedict.
U1000: 1st Daniel Cline; 2nd Stefan Mitroiu.
U800: 1st Stefan Mitroiu; 2nd Troy Tomas.
Over 40: 1st Alonzo Edwards; 2nd Mike Ward.
Under 18: 1st Tony Murray; 2nd Roman Rankin.
U1200: 1st Bill Wyant; 2nd Ron Benedict.
U1350: 1st Methuselah Murray; 2nd Mike Pollack.
U1200: 1st Bill Wyant; 2nd Ron Benedict.
U1000: 1st Daniel Cline; 2nd Stefan Mitroiu.
U800: 1st Stefan Mitroiu; 2nd Troy Tomas.
Over 40: 1st Alonzo Edwards; 2nd Mike Ward.
Under 18: 1st Tony Murray; 2nd Roman Rankin.
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U1200: 1st Bill Wyant; 2nd Ron Benedict.
U1000: 1st Daniel Cline; 2nd Stefan Mitroiu.
U800: 1st Stefan Mitroiu; 2nd Troy Tomas.
Over 40: 1st Alonzo Edwards; 2nd Mike Ward.
Under 18: 1st Tony Murray; 2nd Roman Rankin.
Southern Open

By Terry Canup

This year's 4-star tournament was held on Oct. 21-22. It featured the number 1 & 3 players in the U.S. on the men's side. Unfortunately, the women's side did not reflect the same strength. This is the second year in a row that the top women have failed to show for this event. Most likely, it was because of the amazing number of high-level tournaments across the U.S. and worldwide. After all, there are many fewer top women than men in our association and you can only stretch yourself so thin.

Total entries ended up at 154, a respectable number that pleased the event promoters. Held once again at the top-flight HTTC in Houston, play was first class. The Fall tournament schedule in Texas in 2000 is jam packed with events from Austin to Waco to Harlingen.

Top players included Fan Yi Yong (U.S. #1 rated player) and David Zhuang (U.S. #3), who played each other in the final, as well as Razvan Cretu, Atanda Musa, Barney Reed, Abass Ekun, Viktor Subonj, Shao Yu, and Taju Oshodi. Randy Cohen entered, but was trapped out of town by business. Jim Butler, Darko Rop, and Niraj Oak attended the event but did not compete.

It was a treat watching the three former top Nigerian stars go at it at this tournament. Oshodi, Ekun and Musa all displayed their exceptional talents. A good crowd of former nationalist spectators cheered them on and added unique insight along the way.

This is one of the first major tournaments in the U.S. to feature the 40mm ball. Many believed that this caused other potential top entrants to shy away from the event. Most of the mass of players entered had already been practicing with the 40mm for an extended period.

Asked his opinion of the 40mm after practicing Friday night, Fan Yi Yong replied that he could not think of the Chinese words for "It Sucks." He also predicted that the ITTF may very well reverse themselves and return to the 38mm in the future. Only time will tell. Whatever they choose to do, it is 40mm here to stay in the future. Only time will tell.

Great matches with awesome talent yielded applause from the 200 or so spectators that showed up for the big matches.

The crowd anticipated a major confrontation between Fan and Zhuang in the finals, and they were not disappointed. This battle of speed and finesse versus speed and smash showcased the two distinct playing styles of the shakehand looping Fan and the pips-out penhold hitting of Zhuang. In this 3 out of 5 final, the match stood at 1-1 in games and 22-22 in the third when David went for a big shot and tore out his shoulder in doing so.

This required an injury timeout (monitored by the Referee) that lasted about three minutes. In obvious pain, David tried gallantly to continue. It was a short-lived attempt and he was forced to resign. This in no way diminishes the efforts of both of these great competitors and all hope David will be healed in time for the Nationals in Las Vegas.


Under 18: 1st Howard Lamb; 2nd Robert Andersson; 3rd Timothy Wang; 4th Taylor Hou.

USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE • January/February 2001
The Four-Star 12th Stiga Pacific Rim Open took place Nov 4-5, 2000, thanks once again to Stiga's and Bob Viducich's strong support. Portland Community College generously provided its excellent facilities free of charge. And the tournament came off very nicely thanks to Portland Table Tennis Club (PTTC) volunteers: Tournament Director and international host Jim Scott, Referee and mailing director Bill Mason, entry form designer Bob Ehelebe, Photographers Dat Bui and Tre Bui, equipment transporters and set-up leaders Ken Leatherman and Judy Bayley, Treasurer Bruce Bayley, Tournament Host Fumi Onchi, player name-plate painter and hanger Stan Jensen, food providers and sellers Ken and Bo Pha Ping and their youngest daughters, control desk assistants Sam Ignazzitto and Naomi Deming, unofficial physician Bob Ho, and others.

198 participants from many states plus Canada, Barbados and Vietnam played in 27 events with the 40mm ball for trophies and $7550 in cash prizes. $3900 of this went to the top eight in Men's Singles, and $1900 to the top eight in Women's Singles. Participants included Fan Yi Yong and Chang Jun Gao, plus several top Saigon (Ho Chi Minh City) players: women Phuong Linh Tran, Mai Thy Nguyen and Xuan Hung Mai, and junior boy Diep The Lan. Player and long-time national coach Tru Nguyen and Team Leader Lien Dao were hosted for 11 days by Jim Scott and wife Muoi with lodging, transportation, sightseeing, shopping, exhibition play at Gregory Heights Middle School with Scott Preiss, and friendship matches at PTTC. Denny Dang of the American Vietnam Association worked hard on travel sponsorship; Ly Ai Le helped with excursions. The team from Vietnam crowned their visit with prize money winnings in several events. (See Results.)

The Men's Singles, by the quarterfinals, saw these survivors: Fan Yi Yong, Hiro Hikawa, Mark Liu, Joe Law, Avishy Schmidt, Diep The Lan, Russ Hamilton, and Barney Reed. Joe Law and Diep The Lan fought their way to the semifinals, with Diep coming back after losing the first two games against Avishy in the quarters, 19 in the fifth – on an edge ball.

In Women's Singles, the quarterfinalists were Chang Jun Gao, Allyson Ellis, Whitney Ping, Phuong Linh Tran, Mai Thy Nguyen, Emily Ping, Xuan Hong Mai and Simone Yang. Only the match between the latter pair went three games, as Simone controlled her opponent's powerful attack in the second with off-pace blocking with her medium pips on the backhand. The third game brought out harder attacking on both sides, but Xuan held on to win.

The three Vietnamese teammates thus made the semifinals with Gao, who allowed Mai Thy Nguyen 21 points in the final – over two games. In Open Doubles, after Scott Preiss/Xuan Hong Mai and Mai Thy Nguyen/Phuong Linh Tran bowed out in their respective semifinals, Chang Jun Gao/Diep The Lan went up against Fan Yi Yong/Barney Reed in the Final. The underdogs nearly pulled out the first game with Gao's aggressive and well-placed hits. Leading 19-18, Diep served into the net. But then Gao hammered one for a game-point lead. But then she runs way around to the backhand and smashes a fairly short, but heavy, push into the net. Two uneventful points cost her and Diep the deuce game. Thereafter, they seemed to lose steam, losing the second game at 7. Fan and Gao then teamed up to win Mixed Doubles.

In the semifinals, Diep and Law lost to Fan and Reed, respectively. Diep was competitive against Barney, splitting two games at deuce. Barney's forehand loop from all parts of the table proved too powerful for the up-and-coming junior as he won, 18, -20, 20, 14. Fan showed why he was the top seed, defeating Law, 6, 11, 7.

Fan Yi Yong won the final in straight games, 8, 8, 11, with overpowering close-to-the-table loops and placement that often left Barney out of position: $2,000 to Fan and $1,000 to Reed.

The four Women's Singles Semifinalists, L-R: Champion Chang Jun Gao, Diep The Lan, Finalist Mai Thi Nguyen, Phuong Linh Tran. The latter three are members of the Saigon Team.
Pacific Rim Open Results

Men's Singles - Final: Fan Yi Yong d. Barney J. Reed 8,11,11; SF: Fan d. Joe Law 6,11,7; Reed d. Diep The Lan 18,-20,20,14; QF: Fan d. Hiro Hikawa 15,12,4; Law d. Mark Liu 20,14,20; Reed d. Russ Hamilton 6,20,16; Lan d. Avishy Schmidt -12,-17,16,11,19.

Women's Singles - Final: Chang Jun Gao d. Mai Thy Nguyen 6,15; SF: Chang d. Phuong Linh Tran 12,11; Nguyen d. Xuan Hong Mai 10,15.

Open Doubles - Final: Fan/Reed d. Chang/Lan 20,7; SF: Fan/Reed d. Mai/Scott Preiss 8,9; Chang/Lan d. Nguyen/Tran 10,-19,18.

Mixed Doubles - Final: Fan/Chang d. Reed/ Nguyen 17,18; SF: Fan/Chang d. Tran/Schmidt 13,13; Reed/Nguyen d. Mark Liu/Simone Yang 13,13.


U3200 - Final: Mai Thy Nguyen d. Phuong Linh Tran 15,17; SF: Nguyen d. Diep The Lan -17,15,16; Tran d. Xuan Hong Mai 17,20,16.

U2100 - Final: Misha Kazantsev d. Yung Pak Yan -14,10,18; SF: Kazantsev d. Ron Carver 12,15,18; Yan d. Steve Ma 17,21.

U1900: Avinash Cavate d. Lam Son Do 9,-19,12.

U1700: Robert Yau d. Cuong Pham 21,18.

U1500: Cuong Pham d. Alfred Wong -15,15,18.

U1400: Roscoe Lock d. Asif Makhani 14,-14,18.


U300: Dan Hilburn d. Nicholas Sokol 14,17.

U4000 Doubles: Steve Ma/Avinash Cavale d. Yung Pak Yan/Gary Chu 11,18.

U3200 Doubles: Joseph Chen/Eric Chen d. Raymond Lock/Roscoe Lock 13,12.


Hard Bat - Final: Steve Ma d. George Kawamoto 12,11; SF: Ma d. Bruce Liu 12,24; Kawamoto d. Scott Preiss -10,15,18.

Over 40: Scott Preiss d. Sung Yang 19,16.

Over 50: Phieu Tran d. Bill Mason 16,-15,16.


Under 16: David On d. Robert Yau -11,18,16.

High School: Aurora Malek d. Whitney Ping -18,10,11.

College: Oliver Lei d. Phong Ho 26,16.

Atanda Musa:
Player & Coach

By Larry Hodges

Those of you who were active in the 1980s will remember one of the most exciting players in the world: Atanda Musa, the acrobatic two-winged looper from Nigeria. The best player ever to come out of Africa, he became the model for players all over the world who wanted to emulate his spectacular game. And now ... he's living and coaching right here in New York City!

Musa, who spent 15 years on the Nigerian National Team, reached #20 in the world at his peak. He was 10-times African Men's Singles Champion, and even won Singles & Doubles at the Commonwealth Games one year. A professional player since 1979, he is now more coach than player - yet, at age 41, he was recently rated over 2600.

Yes, he can still play, as those who watched him win the 4-star Garden State Open in September can verify. His match against China's Wang Fei in the final was a barn-stopper -- see write-up in previous issue. He gave USA #1 Cheng Yinghua a scare in the senior final at the Meiklejohn Senior Championships - leading Cheng to say that, if Musa had been trained in China, he could have been one of the best players ever.

Musa led the Nigerian Skypower Team to victory several times at the U.S. Open Team Championships in the early 1980s. In 1985, he made the semifinals of the U.S. Open. Who did he lose to? None other than Cheng, who would go on to win the Open in his first trip to the U.S., three years before moving here. Who did Musa defeat in the quarterfinals? A youthful Jan-Ove Waldner -- not yet at his peak, but who had already made the final of the World Cup.

It was a long journey for Musa, who started out when he was 8 or 9. His father encouraged him a lot, and it led to his professional career. Musa is known to many for his spectacular backhand loop. However, it is his forehand that wins most of his points. He seemingly can run down any ball and either loop or lob it back. He also has a blocking game that surprises opponents who don't think of him as a close-to-the-table blocker. Yet it was mostly his forehand block that won him the Garden State Open. He's simply an all-around player - with a powerful looping game - who always seems to find a way to win.

Besides playing, Musa has always liked coaching as well. In 1992, he became a full-time coach in Saudi Arabia for three years. In 1995, he was hired to coach in Qatar at the Ali club. In 1997 he returned to Nigeria, where he continued to play and coach.

In 1999, Musa came to the U.S., at first to play in tournaments. He ended up staying, along with his family - a wife and three kids, aged 2, 7 and 15.

Musa became the full-time coach and manager of the Manhattan Table Tennis Club in New York City. The club has five tables, and is almost always open - a truly full-time club. Musa coaches about 25 hours each week. The club's owner, Jerry Wartski, is Musa's sponsor, and Musa is very thankful for his help.

So ... if you're in the New York City area, and want some coaching, want to see some spectacular shot-making, or simply want to play, Musa invites you to stop by. Get ready for some serious looping.
I have been working as the head coach of the South Bend Junior program for 3-1/2 years now. We currently have 14 full-time juniors and 20 part-time junior players. One of my main jobs is to promote and recruit junior participation.

The first 18 months to two years, we had little progress in finding new players. We did exhibitions, tournaments, put listings in the paper all with little results. I visited Boys Clubs and many schools; still, very little interest. Then I tried what I call my “flyer program.” I remembered that when you run tournaments, exhibitions or clinics, you have to send out hundreds if not thousands of information sheets to receive a good response. This is what I’ve done over the past two years in recruiting junior players, and the results have been successful.

**Key Points:****

- **I pass out flyers in schools and request that they insert one in every student’s weekly packet.** I prefer grades 3-8. Each school will need 300-500 flyers per school.
- **These flyers advertise a free 6-week course in table tennis.** The first time I did the clinic flyer I distributed 2,500 flyer, and 18 juniors ages 7-14 signed up. The last evening of the 6-week clinic we had a pot luck dinner for students and parents with awards for the students (a USATT Certificate and a $5 participation trophy) at the end of the evening. Eight of the 18 participants signed up at $40 per month for two weekly lessons. It is best to sign-up the students on the final day of the clinic. You can also send a letter explaining the program, times and cost during that week.
- **The key to this program is to make sure the schools include the information in the student’s weekly take-home packet.** The second part is to distribute high numbers of flyers. I usually did 2,500 at a time. The only reason I didn’t pass out more is I was worried about TOO MANY responses.
- **Make sure you talk to the parents. Introduce yourself, talk about why this program started, in March 2000, referrals began to pour in. More importantly, his methods work, with his students consistently winning trophies, 13 of them at the recent Lake Havasu event.**

Attila encourages Coaches and Club Directors to contact him at 949-548-0929 (PowerPong) or by e-mail at attm777@yahoo.com, and to view his website at www.powerpong.org. “Together, we can do this!”

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**Club of the Month**

**POWERPONG: Attila Malek’s Professional Junior Training Center**

PowerPong is a ground-breaking new concept on the USATT club scene. Coach Attila Malek has a vision of a nation-wide network of Professional Training Centers, leading to college scholarships for Junior players.

Located in Newport Beach, CA, PowerPong has eight new Butterfly tables in 3000 square feet, a video camcorder, three Newgy Robots and a TTMatic machine. More importantly, Attila has enrolled 33 Juniors in the program. The average training fee is $100 per month. “Kids, and especially parents, need to see that there is a future in this sport,” Malek asserts. So this program gives the youngster a way to say ‘Look! This could lead to scholarship money, and even a National Championship.’"

Attila sees a day when regional Junior tournament winners can be awarded $20,000 scholarships, and if others in the country follow his lead, a National $100,000 scholarship prize. His goal is to have 80 students enrolled in PowerPong by summer of 2001. “That’s at least $100,000 a year,” Malek points out. “When parents know that we are providing benefits to kids, they are more willing to invest the attention and money it requires to fund Junior Development.”

Malek recruits his students through in-school fliers and classes he teaches at local colleges in the Orange County area. Once the program started, in March 2000, referrals began to pour in. More importantly, his methods work, with his students consistently winning trophies, 13 of them at the recent Lake Havasu event.

Attila’s program includes free weights and jumping rope for conditioning, and a camcorder to record practice sessions. “Drills are extremely important,” Coach Malek states. No one is more qualified to make that statement.

Attila was born in Gyongyos, Hungary and began playing recreationally at age five. “We used to push tables together in the cafeteria at school to make a table,” he remembers. But at the relatively late age of 15 he encountered group training and coaching at the hands of Coach Poprosci. “I did not think that it was helping much,” he recalls, “but when my friends and I played at a tournament, it was obvious that we had improved … a lot!”

In 1978 Attila came to the U.S., appearing in Michigan where he met Dell Sweeris. By 1979, he was the U.S. National Champion. “In 23 years, I have seen little progress in Elite Development in the U.S. This is a program that works! It is nearly impossible to do development properly from the top of the organization down. If other coaches will emulate and join me in staging Regional and National tournaments, and in raising these scholarships, we can make it work!”

Attila encourages Coaches and Club Directors to contact him at 949-548-0929 (PowerPong) or by e-mail at attm777@yahoo.com, and to view his website at www.powerpong.org. “Together, we can do this!”
Usually, when a young table tennis player is featured as junior of the month, it is because they’ve had a remarkable increase in rating points, established themselves as an up-and-comer, or even more notably, their tournament results demonstrate that they are, indeed, a rising star.

For Cory Eider, none of these categories applies. His rating, in the mid 2100’s, has been flat for over two years. His tournament schedule is hardly packed. And, after a short stint as U.S. #1 in the Under 12’s, his ranking has slid to #6 in the Under 18’s. So what’s the big deal? Why all the hoopla? Well, it’s more interesting than you might think.

When I asked Cory what long-term and short-term goals he has for table tennis, his response was simply, “I don’t have any, really.” And when I followed-up by asking if he could recall ever having any goals for his table tennis, he answered, “To beat Eric Green. Yeah, I just wanted to beat Green.” That was about nine years ago. Eric Green was the best of a young bunch of local kids who hung out at the Valley Youth Center; a recreation center attached to an elementary school that Cory attended in Duluth, Minnesota. In a matter of months, Eric Green was toast.

Make no mistake; Cory Eider is a competitive monster. When his coaches, Angelo Simone and Gary Hendrickson, brought an eight-year-old Cory to Minneapolis for his first USATT sanctioned tournament, they said he was very goal oriented. In fact, they introduced him as a young hockey star who liked to play ping pong. Cory’s involvement with the sport, and his becoming a champion are a direct result of the hard work and dedication of three very special people: Angelo Simone, Gary Hendrickson and Sunny Helbacka.

Angelo is a recreation supervisor in the Duluth Park and Recreation Department, who, with just one table, introduced the sport to hundreds of kids. When he began working with the kids he was a competent 1650-rated player who enjoyed sharing his knowledge and love of the sport. As the program grew to include between thirty to fifty juniors, practicing two to three times each week on six to eight tables, he became a skillful developmental coach with a rating that topped out at over 1950.

Gary grew up with Angelo in Duluth, and later, moved down to the Minneapolis/St. Paul area. He always dreamed that a day would come when Duluth table tennis would mean more than a few regulars battling it out over beers every Friday at the local tavern. During the years he was living in the twin cities he milked the top players for information, took lessons, and played in leagues and tournaments. He gathered as much technical knowledge as he could, saved his money, and used it to travel back to Duluth on the weekends to share what he had learned with Angelo and the kids. Gary was a 1300 player when the Duluth program began; he is rated 1872 now.

Sunny is the administrator with a heart of gold and a commitment to providing quality youth programs. As Director of the Duluth Park and Recreation Department, Sunny was in a position to make table tennis an official program of the Park and Recreation Department. He was able to raise funds for tournament travel expenses and serve as a much-needed chaperone. Unfortunately for Sunny his rating remains around 1000, exactly where it was when they began.

So even though Cory Eider has a better chance of representing USA Hockey in the Olympics than USA Table Tennis, he is an important kind of U.S. table tennis player. He is an athlete and a competitor. His table tennis skills are the result of a successful recreational program much like our top basketball players, swimmers, and hockey players. Our past and future juniors of the month, those up-and-comers, and rising stars need more Cory Eiders pressing them, pushing them, challenging and checking them. And if you can stay one step ahead of a competitor like Cory Eider, you’re on a very short list.
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