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Clockwise from top:

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and Thomas Keinath
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**USATT LEAGUE WATCH**

Sponsored by Paddle Palace and Stiga
www.usatt.org/league

By USATT League Director
Larry Hodges

Below are the current stats on the USATT League, which now has leagues in exactly 40 states. Take a trip to www.usatt.org/league, explore the pages, and join - or start! - a league! [NOTE - the “free” trial period of the league has been extended to April 1, 2003.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sept. 1</th>
<th>Oct. 1</th>
<th>Dec. 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leagues</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>States with Leagues</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>63</td>
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<tr>
<td>League Members</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>1487</td>
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<tr>
<td>League Participants</td>
<td>36</td>
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<tr>
<td>League Matches</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>1213</td>
<td>6787</td>
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**WET BALL LETS?**

By International Umpire Paul Kovac

Editor’s Note — A question that often comes up in matches is what to do when a ball becomes wet during a rally. The question was asked a while back in the USATT’s “Stump the Ump” feature at www.usatt.org/rules. Here is online International Umpire Paul Kovac’s response.

Q: I am a club umpire but recently in our club we have had a number of questions regarding a wet ball during the point. My question is when, if ever, is it permissible to call a let on a wet ball. For this purpose let’s suppose that during a point, a player strikes the ball, the ball goes almost directly down and leaves a small round wet spot on the player’s paddle. Your response would be greatly appreciated, thank you.

Submitted by Jon O’Donnell

As: The Rule book specifies situations when the rally shall be a let, and a wet ball is not one of them. To my knowledge, the situation you describe has always been a judgment call by the umpire. A player is supposed to keep his/her equipment in good shape, including seeing to it that both the ball and his/her racket are dry, before he/she serves. I believe most umpires, including Your Friendly Umpire, would handle the “wet” situation by these rules of thumb.

- If a receiver fails to make a good return of a serve, and the umpire feels that it was the wet ball that affected the outcome of the rally, the rally should be declared a let.
- If the receiver of a good serve fails to make a good return only because his/her racket was wet, the server scores the point. In this situation, there is no reason why the server should be penalized by being denied a point for his/her opponent’s failure to keep his/her equipment in good shape.
- If, during the rally, the ball or either player’s racket becomes wet, and the umpire is convinced that this affected the outcome of the rally, the rally should be declared a let.

In many such situations an observant umpire would interrupt the rally, and call it a let, before its outcome. Since the Rules are written with the understanding that every match has an umpire assigned to it, the only advice I can give you is that you should try to apply the above reasoning to your particular situation.

WORLD’S FASTEST SMASH COMPETITION

Care of Steve McCarthy/Wellington Table Tennis

A little known New Zealander, Lark Brandt, came from nowhere to win the inaugural “World Fastest Smash Competition” with a smash of 112.5 kilometers per hour (69.9 mph). The smash speed will be sent for inclusion in the Guinness Book of World Records and is a world first.

Lark comes from the Harewood Table Tennis Club in Christchurch and also competes in volleyball and martial arts. Surprised to beat some of the best junior players in the world, from Japan, China and Chinese Taipei, he explained that the key was technique. He used timing and strength, coupled with a loose wrist and a flat smash. The second place speed was 107 kph (66.5 mph). The smash was recorded using sports speed radar and a 38mm ball. The 38mm balls have a greater density than the 40mm ball and are able to be picked up by the radar gun. They are dropped vertically to the “smasher.”

In front of an audience of 300, Lark won a brass replica canon set on New Zealand marble, an All Black rugby shirt and a toy Kiwi (Kiwis are the New Zealand national symbol). The shirt and Kiwi will be given to his two daughters when he returns to Christchurch.
Interview with

**Paul David**

By Larry Hodges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age:</th>
<th>27</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date of Birth:</td>
<td>December 27, 1975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Club:</td>
<td>Plays at the Champion TTC, coaches at Amsterdam Billiards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Rating:</td>
<td>2459</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest Rating:</td>
<td>2515</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How did you get started in table tennis?
In Guyana at the YMCA.

How did you get to be a top player?
I was coached at the "Y" by Aston Arthur, a former Guyana national player and a very good coach.

Describe your playing style.
Controlled Aggression.

Any new techniques that you are working on?
Better serve and attack and improving my footwork.

Where are you from? Did you play table tennis there?
Albouystown in Georgetown Guyana. I was national junior champion and on the national team.

Why did you come to the U.S.?
To play a higher level of table tennis and improve my life.

What are your best titles and wins?
- Guyana Junior Champion
- Goddard (Caribbean) junior champion,
- 1993 Mash Champion (Guyan)
- Guyana Top 16 Champion
- 2-time New Jersey Open Champion
- Delaware Open Under 2500 champion
- New York Open Champion
- [Editor’s note: Paul’s best tournament wins include David Zhuang, Ashu Jain, Barney J. Reed, Dave Fernandez, De Tran, Adam Hugh, Sasa Drinic.]

You recently won the New Jersey Open with wins over Ashu Jain, De Tran, and Adam Hugh. What do you attribute this great success to?
Weeks of practice, some input from another coach (Derek Black, a former top Canadian junior player) and my improved mental toughness.

What are your goals as a player?
To play in the Olympics.

You are not only a top player but a full-time coach. Tell us about your coaching career.
I talk to players regardless of their level and sometimes I make suggestions to players about their game. Some of them listen and ask for more, that is how I started it spread by word of mouth. I have about a dozen regular students. I enjoy coaching and I take serious interest in my students. I also run a league in Manhattan at Amsterdam Billiards with 46 players.

What are your interests outside of table tennis?
Sports I am big basketball, baseball and football fan.

Anything else I should ask?
The real motivation in my life is my 2-year-old daughter. Being a single parent is a great challenge, which I embrace because of the love of my daughter.
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- Stiga Open
- Eastern Open
- Matthew J. Murad Mem. Open
- Western Open

### Location
- Fremont (CA)
- U. of Delaware - Newark (DE)
- Rutgers U. - Piscataway (NJ)
- Germantown (MD)

### Date
- 2/28-29
- 6/12-13
- 7/24-25
- 8/21-22

### Deadline
- 2/13
- 5/28
- 7/9
- 8/6

---

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**Policies:** Players may not enter two events with identical start times. Events can be cancelled or combined at the discretion of the tournament committee. No prizes will be awarded for splits, dumps, default losses or no-shows. Players agree to follow USATT and NATT rules.

**Entry Deadline:** Entries must be postmarked 15 days prior to the 1st day of the tournament. Entries postmarked late will either be accepted with a $20 late fee, or be rejected based on available space.

Check-ins: Participants are required to check-in 30 minutes prior to their first event.

---

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<th>DATE</th>
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<th>COST</th>
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<td>$20</td>
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<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 U1250 RR</td>
<td>9:00 PM</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
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<td>26 U1100 RR</td>
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<td>$20</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
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<td>27 U950 RR</td>
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<tr>
<td>28 U800/Novice RR</td>
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<td>$20</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>29 U4200 Doubles SE</td>
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<td>$15/ea</td>
<td>$80</td>
<td>$30</td>
<td>$200</td>
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<td>$15/ea</td>
<td>$60</td>
<td>$30</td>
<td>$200</td>
<td>$80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Visit www.natabletennis.com for other fine tournaments being held by North American Table Tennis!
California Open

Tournament Info: Referee: Azmy Ibrahim
Venue: City Beach Fremont at 4020 Technology Place in Fremont, CA. Taraflex flooring and excellent lighting.
Check-in: Starts on Saturday, February 28, 2004 at 8AM at the venue.
Ratings: Ratings from the January/February issue of USATT Magazine will be used.
Airport: San Jose, Oakland, & San Francisco International Airports.
Official Tournament Hotel: Fremont Marriott 510-413-3700

Stiga Open

Tournament Info: Referee: Terry Bell
Venue: University of Delaware, Carpenter Sports Building in Newark, Delaware. Wood floors and good lighting.
Check-in: Starts on Saturday, June 12, 2004 at 8AM at the venue.
Ratings: Ratings from the May/June issue of USATT Magazine will be used.
Airport: Philadelphia International Airport. 50 minutes, or by train.
Official Tournament Hotel: Sleep Inn 302-453-1700

Eastern Open

Tournament Info: Referee: Terry Bell
Venue: Rutgers University, Piscataway, NJ at the Werblin Recreation Center. Wood floors and excellent lighting.
Entry Deadline: Entries must be postmarked by FRIDAY, July 9, 2004.
Check-in: Starts on Saturday, July 24, 2004 at 8AM at the venue.
Ratings: Ratings from the July/August issue of USATT Magazine will be used.
Airport: Newark International Airport.
Official Tournament Hotel: Sierra Suites 732-235-1000

Matthew J. Murad Memorial Open

Tournament Info: Referee: Terry Bell
Venue: Discovery Sports Center, 18031 Central Park Circle, Boyds, MD 20841. Rubber floors and excellent lighting.
Entry Deadline: Entries must be postmarked by FRIDAY, August 6, 2004.
Check-in: Starts on Saturday, August 21, 2004 at 8AM at the venue.
Ratings: Ratings from the July/August issue of USATT Magazine will be used.
Airport: Dulles, Reagan National, and BWI Airports.
Official Tournament Hotel: Gaithersburg Marriott Washingtonian Center

Western Open

Tournament Info: Referee: Azmy Ibrahim
Venue: City Beach Fremont at 4020 Technology Place in Fremont, CA. Taraflex flooring and excellent lighting.
Entry Deadline: Entries must be postmarked by FRIDAY, August 20, 2004.
Check-in: Starts on Saturday, September 4, 2004 at 8AM at the venue.
Ratings: Ratings from the July/August issue of USATT Magazine will be used.
Airport: San Jose, Oakland, & San Francisco International Airports.
Official Tournament Hotel: Fremont Marriott 510-413-3700

Registration Form:

NAME OF TOURNAMENT

Name: 
Address: 
City: State: Zip: 
Phone Number: ( ) - Gender: MALE / FEMALE
USATT ID: Expiration: Rating: Date of Birth: 
Email: 
Please list event number:
1) 2) 3)
4) 5) 6)
7) 8)
Doubles Partner: 

USATT Rating & Registration Fee: $5

Total Event Entry Fee: $ 

Registration Form:

NAME OF TOURNAMENT

Name: 
Address: 
City: State: Zip: 
Phone Number: ( ) - Gender: MALE / FEMALE
USATT ID: Expiration: Rating: Date of Birth: 
Email: 
Please list event number:
1) 2) 3)
4) 5) 6)
7) 8)
Doubles Partner: 

USATT Rating & Registration Fee: $5

Total Event Entry Fee: $ 

Registration Form:

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Address: 
City: State: Zip: 
Phone Number: ( ) - Gender: MALE / FEMALE
USATT ID: Expiration: Rating: Date of Birth: 
Email: 
Please list event number:
1) 2) 3)
4) 5) 6)
7) 8)
Doubles Partner: 

USATT Rating & Registration Fee: $5

Total Event Entry Fee: $ 

Registration Form:

NAME OF TOURNAMENT

Name: 
Address: 
City: State: Zip: 
Phone Number: ( ) - Gender: MALE / FEMALE
USATT ID: Expiration: Rating: Date of Birth: 
Email: 
Please list event number:
1) 2) 3)
4) 5) 6)
7) 8)
Doubles Partner: 

USATT Rating & Registration Fee: $5

Total Event Entry Fee: $ 

Registration Form:

NAME OF TOURNAMENT

Name: 
Address: 
City: State: Zip: 
Phone Number: ( ) - Gender: MALE / FEMALE
USATT ID: Expiration: Rating: Date of Birth: 
Email: 
Please list event number:
1) 2) 3)
4) 5) 6)
7) 8)
Doubles Partner: 

USATT Rating & Registration Fee: $5

Total Event Entry Fee: $ 

Please send completed entry form with payment to: North American Table Tennis, Inc.
401 N. Washington Street, Suite 110 Rockville, MD 20850

Deadline: Postmarked by 15 DAYS PRIOR TO FIRST OF TOURNAMENT

Total: $ 

Return cheques will be charged a $25 fee. Make checks payable to NATT. Please send completed entry form with payment to:
401 N. Washington Street, Suite 110
North American Table Tennis, Inc.
Rockville, MD 20850

Return cheques will be charged a $25 fee. Make checks payable to NATT. Please send completed entry form with payment to:
401 N. Washington Street, Suite 110
North American Table Tennis, Inc.
Rockville, MD 20850

Return cheques will be charged a $25 fee. Make checks payable to NATT. Please send completed entry form with payment to:
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North American Table Tennis, Inc.
Rockville, MD 20850

Return cheques will be charged a $25 fee. Make checks payable to NATT. Please send completed entry form with payment to:
401 N. Washington Street, Suite 110
North American Table Tennis, Inc.
Rockville, MD 20850
The Nittaku ball, universally regarded as the best in the world, is also the official ball of the U.S. Nationals and U.S. Open and most international competitions.

**Nittaku**

**MORISTO DF**
Latest technology for the defensive/allround player. You feel the difference! Top sheet and sponge have superior elasticity. Ball goes deep into the sponge for a great spring effect, but combined with the slower speed it simultaneously provides a "hang effect" with excellent control. Amazing feeling!

- Speed: 8.0 Spin: 8.6 Sponge: 1.6, 2.0
- Price: $29.95
- Item: RNMOD

**HAMMOND FA**
Fantastic pips out rubber for the offensive player. Very fast in speed, very powerful, and more spin than most pips out rubbers. If you want the advantages of pips, but you don't want to give up your offensive potential, this is the rubber for you!

- Speed: 9.3 Spin: 7.4 Sponge: 2.0, 2.2
- Price: $27.95
- Item: RNHAFA

**HAMMOND PRO ALPHA**
The magic rubber you have been waiting for!!! Extremely fast and springy, with amazing feel. More power than any other rubber and it has fantastic control.

- Speed: 9.5 Spin: 9.5 Sponge: 2.0, 2.2
- Price: $28.95
- Item: RNHPA

**3 STAR PREMIUM BALLS**
Manufactured in Japan to higher specifications with higher quality material than any other ball! Nittaku Premium balls are more consistently round, more consistent in hardness, and last longer than any other ball in the world. Label on ball says "Made in Japan".

- 40mm: $9.50 for 6 balls
- $18.95/dozen balls

**INNOVA PREMIUM**
By combining STIGA's new Air Capsule System (ACS) technology with a 2.4 or 2.6mm sponge and ultra-thin top sheet, STIGA has produced the ultimate extra thick rubber sheet. A perfect combination of sponge and surface rubber results in maximum speed and spin on offensive attacks and maximum feeling on all touch shots. Spong: 20, 22, 24, 26. Item: RSINP

**INNOVA AND INNOVA ULTRA LIGHT**
ACS (Air-Capsule System) technology allows very high speed to be combined with maximum spring/elasticity in an ultra-light rubber with outstanding control. This phenomenon must be experienced first hand! Innova is approx. 10% lighter and Innova Ultra Light is approx. 15% lighter than regular rubber sheets. Sponge: 1.8, 2.0, 2.2

**STIGA KEVLAR WRB**
Ideal for aggressive players who depend on speed to gain the upper hand. Speed: OFF Handle: FL(sm), FL(sm), AN, ST

- Wgt: 93
- Piles: 5W, 2K, 2C
- Price: $69.95
- Item: SSWKE

**STIGA TITANIUM WRB**
Built for speed! Ideal for smashing and attacking the ball at all stages of the rally. The WRB system accelerates the blade face for faster returns, more power and extra sensitivity of touch.

- Speed: OFF Handle: FL(sm), FL(sm), AN, ST
- Wgt: 97
- Piles: 5W, 2T, 2T
- Price: $114.95
- Item: SSWT1

**STIGA CARBOKEV**
Ideal for offensive players who want extra touch when attacking and counterattacking. Decrease in blade weight improves rate of recovery after each stroke.

- Speed: OFF
- Handle: FL, FL
- Wgt: 99
- Piles: 5W, 2K, 2C
- Price: $99.95
- Item: SSWCK
TITANIUM TURBO
The fastest of the JUIC Titanium Blades. Turbo-charged play!
Combination of meshed Titanium and wood made with a unique electric drying system that reduces the weight of the blade by 10-15%. Meshed titanium provides excellent power and speed. Highly recommended with the JUIC Ultima Rubber series for 40mm ball play.
Speed: OFF+ Handle: FL, AN, ST Wgt: 87 gm Piles: 5W T Blade only $77.95 Item: XUSJT

VARITES The Sniper!
Latest technology with polymer-combination and an innovative production process creates a tighter molecular structure, giving great spring-effect and large sweetspot. Adds an extra Ultima dimension, giving explosive rotation and speed.
Speed 9.5/Spin 9.1 Sponge 2.0, 2.3 Price $26.95 Item: RJSCTE

JUIC Scramble EX Ultima
Double High Tension sponge adds an extra Ultima dimension, giving explosive rotation and speed.
Speed 9.5/Spin 9.1 Sponge 2.0, 2.3 Price $26.95 Item: RJSCTE

JUIC Scramble 21 Ultima
JUIC's Ultima sponge is combined with the Scramble 21 top sheet. Increases the bouncing rate of the rubber as well as the ball feeling at impact.
Speed 9.4/Spin 9.2 Sponge 2.0, 2.5 Price $26.95 Item: RJSCTE

JOOLA COMBO SPECIALS
include blade + 2 sheets Joola rubber [Add $3 per sheet if choosing Fakir rubber]

ROSSKOPF CARBON
Ultimate Sweet Spot! The carbon layers enlarge the sweet spot and therefore control the high speed characteristics of the rare and very expensive cypress veneers. The result is an offensive blade with extreme acceleration but almost unbelievable control.
Speed OFF+ Handle: FL, AN, ST Wgt: 87 gm Piles: 3W, 2C Blade only $69.95 Item: JSCGRC

COMBO SPECIAL
$99.95 Item: JSCGRC

JOOLA KS
The next innovation in RAG-Technology!
The JOOLA KS has an extremely absorbing, elastic "honey"-comb placed in the grip in such a way that the bat has to immediately restore its original form right after contact with the ball - this provides an enormous backstroke effect, which increases control and speed by far. Moreover, this proved RAG-Technology (RoundAboutGrip) of the K-Line provides a sensor-optimized transmission between hand and grip, the guarantee for a sensitive play even in most extreme situations.
Speed OFF+ Handle: FL, AN, ST Wgt: 82 gm Piles: SW Blade only $45.45 Item: SDKS

COMBO SPECIAL
$75.95 Item: SDKS

PADDLE PALACE: NORTH AMERICAN DISTRIBUTOR FOR JOOLA PRODUCTS

TEXALIUM
Outstanding Allround Blade!
This medium-weight 5-ply blade has excellent control and great feel. If you're looking for the most versatile allround blade, this is the one. Special price includes this great blade and your choice of any two sheets of fantastic JUIC rubber.
Speed: ALL+ Handle: FL, AN, ST Wgt: 85 gm Blade only: $46.95 Item: SJTAX

COMBO SPECIAL
$69.95

JOOLA PURE EFFECT
Powerful long-lasting speed glue! Outstanding ultimate speed and spin! $24.95
The incredible speed glue effect lasts for several days without re-gluing! You get more power than with traditional speed glues - it is the maximum in spin and speed regluing effects without loss of control! If you re-glue, you absolutely must try JUIC Pure Effect Glue for the ultimate gluing experience. Item: GJPU
Added bonus: JUIC Pure Effect glue can safely and legally be sent by air shipment!

JOOLA Turbo Cleaner Set $10.95
Unique pump spray bottle encased in cleaning sponge. W/150ml refill bottle. Ground shipment only. Item: GJORCS

JOOLA Rossi Plus Glue $10.95
For aggressive offensive players, ITTF-approved. 250 ml can Item: GORO Reg. $12.95

Joola Turbo Cleaner Set $10.95
Unique pump spray bottle encased in cleaning sponge. W/150ml refill bottle. Ground shipment only. Item: GJORCS

AMERICAN DISTRIBUTOR FOR JUIC PRODUCTS

PADDLE PALACE: NORTH AMERICAN DISTRIBUTOR FOR JUOLA PRODUCTS
Executive Director's Report

By Teodor “Doru” Gheorghe

With a total of 734 entries, the 2004 Nationals looks like a very promising tournament. We changed the playing hall back to the one used in 2001 to address last year’s complaints of slippery floors. I would like to ask everybody to send me your comments (what was good, what was wrong) so we can improve next year.

The USATT Strategic plan was approved by USOC, and the Board took the first steps in implementing it by nominating the chairs for new committees (Coaching and Collegiate NCAA). For the next year we will nominate the coaches for our Junior and Cadet National Teams that will be in charge with training and coaching of our teams.

According to our Strategic Plan, in 2005 USATT will open two regional training centers. By the end of August 2004, we will post on the web the selection criteria and the bid specs. Clubs interested in applying as Regional Training Centers should keep an eye on the USATT web page, or contact USATT for more information.

At the last Board meeting, held in November of 2003 in Colorado Springs, the Board approved the increase of the membership fees and created two new membership categories. I did a lot of analysis of our fees and reached the conclusion that the old membership fees did not cover the benefits and the time that staff spends working for membership.

It was necessary to take this step and I am sure that the additional benefits that you will receive will exceed the membership fees that you pay. I urge you to give your support to the fee increases.

This magazine came in your mail wrapped in a plastic bag in order to avoid problems that we’ve had recently with people receiving only the cover or no cover. This should solve the problem.

In the middle of January we will have the USA Trials for singles. I hope you entered before the deadline and are ready to make the Olympic Team! I wish good luck to all of you.

Keep an eye on the USATT web page in order to enter the USA Olympic Trials for Doubles, which will be held in March in Washington D.C. Sometime early next year we will open a USATT forum where anyone who wants to ask questions relating to USATT business may do so. We will try to answer all your questions and concerns so you can stay informed.

At the beginning of next year the USATT web page will have a new design, with links to USOC and other NGB’s. Also we will have more space for advertising so companies wishing to advertise on the USATT web pages are welcome to apply.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all of you who volunteered your time to help table tennis in the U.S. and who gave us helpful feedback to improve our activities.

Last but not least I would like to congratulate the players that qualified for the 2004 Paralympics Games. Finally, I wish all of you a Happy, Wealthy and Healthy New Year!

Treasurer’s Report

By Tong Lee

The Board of Directors has approved some fee increases and two new membership categories. Financial analysis shows that the cost of membership benefits exceeds revenues from membership fees by over $118,000, and the increases are necessary to narrow the disparity between membership revenue and benefits without resorting to cutting back on benefits. (See: www.usatt.org/news/membership_revenue_expenses.shtml)

In fact, we plan to introduce two new benefits in 2004: 1) An Olympic Xcel card (OXL) that offers a discount from 5-20% of the purchase of goods and services from participating companies such as United Airlines, Marriott Hotels, and Gateway Computers, (www.usatt.org/news/2003_0x1_card_info.shtml) and the U.S. Olympic Store (http://store.usolympicteam.com/), and 2) the mailing of the magazine in a plastic shrink-wrap bag to prevent tearing of the cover as a result of new handling procedures by the United States Postal Service. The OXL card will be mailed to those who renew or purchase a membership in 2004 (see table below for eligible membership categories).

The new fees, except for league memberships, are effective on February 1, 2004. No exemption from any fee increase will be allowed for tournaments commencing after January 31, 2004, even though their tournament entry forms may have already been printed and mailed. Tournament directors should collect the appropriate membership fee and tournament pass fee during registration at the tournament site.

The box below is a summary of fees and benefits for the various membership categories.

Membership Categories and Benefits - Effective Feb. 1, 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fee</th>
<th>Magazine</th>
<th>Tournament</th>
<th>League</th>
<th>Insurance</th>
<th>OXL Card</th>
<th>$Ticket</th>
<th>Vote</th>
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<td>No</td>
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**NEW CATEGORIES**

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<th>Fee</th>
<th>Magazine</th>
<th>Tournament</th>
<th><strong>$Ticket</strong></th>
<th><strong>Vote</strong></th>
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</tbody>
</table>

1A one-year household membership consists of one or two adult family members, and junior under 17 years if age residing at the same mailing address. Please provide the names and birthdates of all household members.

2A three-year household membership consists of one or two adult family members, and juniors under 15 years of age residing at the same mailing address. Please provide the names and birthdates of all household members.

3Juniors under 17 years of age are eligible.

4Juniors under 15 years of age are eligible.

5Full-time students of an accredited college or university are eligible. Proof of full-time enrollment must be provided.

6A Booster membership is available to those who do not intend to participate in sanctioned tournaments, or coach, officiate, serve on committees or on the Board of Directors, and wish to support USATT and its elite athletes.

7Insurance is provided only to supervised events at affiliated clubs, and to members of USATT participating in sanctioned events (contact USATT headquarters for coverage details).

8One ticket each for admission to the finals of the U.S. Open and one for the U.S. Nationals.
President’s Report
By Sheri Soderberg Pittman

As I look back at 2003, I feel a sense of personal satisfaction and pride that USATT has turned a critical corner. In this report, I would like to review and highlight some of the important programs, events and developments in the past year, and preview some of what we plan to do in 2004.

2003 Highlights
• Launched the USATT League to reach out to recreational players, with Paddle Palace and Esculade Sports/Stiga as sponsors
• Outsourced ratings to provide more accurate and timely tournament processing
• Stabilized staff with promotion of long-time USATT coach Doru Gheorghe to executive director and signing him to a 3-year contract; renewed Larry Hodges’ contract as magazine editor and webmaster, as well as USATT League and club programs director, through 2008.
• Terminated the Oakbrook Training Center contract, saving USATT over $80,000 in encumbered expenses
• Appointed first-ever pro bono legal advisor, former USATT Board member Dennis Taylor, Esq., saving thousands of dollars in legal fees
• Used professional event management (pro bono and paid) at USATT-run tournaments and made a profit on both
• Renewed sponsorships with Table Tennis Pioneers (Clothing) and Nittaku (Balls) for more cash and more products
• Secured ITTF funding through the North American Table Tennis Union
• Solidified USATT financial position with a projected surplus of about $90,000 for 2003
• Developed a Strategic Plan that has been approved by the USOC
• Established the first USOC Community Olympic Development Program to promote table tennis
• Provided additional support for athletes by awarding Pan Am medallists a bonus of $3,500, securing a $2,000/year over five years sponsorship/prize money for Junior events (the “Mr. Neng-Chin Shih Memorial Junior Sponsorship”), and soliciting supplementary prize money in USATT tournaments
• Provided continued training of juniors by arranging with Martin-Kilpatrick (Butterfly) for overseas training at the Butterfly Dohjo in Japan
• Commendable Athlete Performance: quarterfinalist in Women’s Singles at the world championships; automatic qualifier for Olympic Games; 2 golds, 1 silver and 1 bronze medal at Pan Am Games; 1 gold, 1 silver and 4 bronzes in an ITTF World Junior Tour; participated in the first-ever Junior World Championships

2004 Preview
• Offer more membership categories to choose from, with most including a USOC Olympic Xcel (OXL) card that offers valuable discounts
• Bring back the ITTF Pro Tour as a membership benefit and as a profit center
• Budget for and hire a USATT Technical Director to help establish and oversee coaching programs and coaching certification programs, to coordinate all the programs for National Teams, and to implement, control and coordinate the regional and national training centers.
• Improve the website, including starting a forum to generate more website advertisement revenue and to be responsive to the membership
• Increase marketing efforts to find more sponsorship revenue

Finally, I want to thank my colleagues on the Board of Directors, staff, volunteers, sponsors, members and athletes for making all that happened in 2003 possible.

I wish you all a Happy New Year!

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Robo-Mechanics:
How the 40mm Ball Has Impacted the Game
By Richard McAfee,
Director of The Newgy Coaching System and USATT Certified National Coach

It has now been several years since the change to the 40mm ball. Perhaps no rule change in our sport’s history has had such a major impact on the game. Coaches and athletes the World over have struggled to adjust the technical elements of play to take full advantage of the new ball’s playing characteristics. This has resulted in major changes in the way our sport is being played and taught.

Technical Changes Caused by the 40mm Ball
To best explain the 40mm ball’s impact on technique, let’s take a look at how the new ball size has affected the basic stroke elements. These elements consist of: how we contact the ball (amount of force or friction), when we contact the ball (timing), and where we contact the ball (point on the ball).

Friction versus Force Contact
Increasing the size of the ball to 40mm has decreased both the overall spin and speed of the ball. However, the spin element has been much more affected with an overall loss of up to 18% of initial spin. In addition, the 40mm ball loses its spin and speed quicker while traveling through the air and also loses even more energy when it contacts the table than did the 38mm ball.

In simple terms, this means that heavy spin strokes are not as effective as they were with the 38mm ball and that the emphasis is now much more on force (forward) contact.

Timing
This emphasis on more force type of contact and the overall reduction of the spin on the ball has also had an effect on stroke timing. With the 38mm ball it was possible to contact the ball as it was descending and to produce an effective heavy spin re-loop against topspin. Today, with the 40mm ball, this stroke is not very effective. Instead, top players are now making every effort to contact the ball no later than the top of the bounce.

Contact Point on the Ball
The decrease in spin on the 40mm ball has also brought about a change in where the racket should contact the ball (racket angle) on most strokes. In general, the heavier the spin, the more the contact point on the ball moves towards the direction the spin is coming from. For example, the heavier the topspin, the more the contact point on the ball moves towards the top of the ball. The reverse holds true for underspin.

Since the 40mm ball now carries less spin, the contact point for most strokes has moved more towards the center. This contact point makes it easier to drive more balls forward. It also means that the modern loop and hit strokes look more alike. With the 38mm ball, players were taught very different starting and finishing positions for the loop and hit. With the 40mm ball, this is no longer true. The modern loop and hit strokes flow more together with the main distinguishing feature being the ratio of friction to force contact imparted.

Tactical Changes Caused by the 40mm Ball
Within the sport of Table Tennis, there are four ways to tactically win a point. These include:

1. Ball Speed
2. Ball Spin (creating opportunities for your opponent to miss)
3. Special Techniques (long pips or unique stroke)
4. Time Pressure

As we have already discussed, Ball Spin is the area most negatively affected by the change to the 40mm ball. It is now much more difficult to force errors from your opponent by simply changing the amount of spin on the ball.

Ball Speed has always been considered the ultimate tactic and this has not changed with the 40mm ball. However the 40mm ball does slow down much more quickly after hitting the table than did the 38mm ball. This makes counter attacking even stronger drives possible and this has resulted in more exciting power rallies.

Special Technique play is still effective although it is being played at a higher speed than before. The recent success of aggressive chopping styles of play could be seen at the recent Paris World Championships where two players of this style reached the quarterfinals and one the final of Men’s Singles.

In my opinion, Time Pressure will play an ever-larger tactical role in the future. We are already seeing signs of this as more and more strokes are being played early in the bounce and even stronger drives are being counter-attacked.

Training For Your Future Success
As in most sports, the future in Table Tennis can best be summed up by the motto, “bigger, stronger, faster.” The greatest impact of the 40mm ball has been to reduce spin. Spin has always been the “skill” element of our sport. With this element reduced the sport will become even more athletic (physical) than before.

Future training trends:
- Physical training will become more important with the emphasis on power (strength with speed) training.
- There will be an increased focus on the forearm snap to deliver power. This will become more important as the game gets faster and on many strokes there will not be time to use the lower body.
- There will be an increased emphasis on counter-attacking rather than playing defensive strokes. With the 40mm ball it is now possible to apply power to most strokes rather than just redirect your opponent’s power.

PHYSICAL TRAINING FOR TABLE TENNIS
By Carl Danner

The physical demands of world-class table tennis are tremendous, yet players can also become fairly advanced (e.g. 2000 level, or even higher) without any physical training and without being in particularly good shape. Few other sports have such a steep gap between the conditioning of intermediate and top players. Since coordination and skill can take you that far without great strength or fitness, when should young players pursue physical training?

For several reasons, I think physical training should be part of every serious young player’s routine. Fitness is needed for the good footwork that high-level play absolutely demands, and that players should develop from the start. The good training habits (and attitudes) that will be needed later are best developed early. Other active sports always include a fitness component, and keeping up with (say) the average high school varsity athlete shouldn’t be too much to ask. Physical training also builds confidence and helps players think clearly when their less-fit opponents might be winded. For most, the problem of finding good playing conditions, practice partners and technical coaching will be a greater challenge than keeping up with reasonable physical training demands.

What specific exercises? Here, there’s obviously room for many approaches that should be tailored to an athlete’s age and progress. I recommend some running for all ages, even if it’s only once around a playing field for a nine year old. By their teens, serious players should be running at least ten or fifteen miles a week, and stretching fully before each practice session. Sprints, jump rope, and quick movement exercises are also good. Weights are a debatable subject, but should (if they are used) be tailored for strength and flexibility rather than building bulk muscle. This means lighter weights, with more repetitions through a full range of motion. At-the-table drills (particularly footwork drills) should add another physical component.

Does this sound intimidating? If it does, consider this. By the age of 16, most players who will be top world class are approaching 2600 or higher, and able to run rings around your average club player without breathing hard. (Indeed, since girls mature earlier, that 16-year-old rating threshold isn’t much lower for them.) Any 12 year old who doesn’t want to rule out this chance will treat his sport like the serious athletic endeavor it is. At the same time, youngsters can have fun and make progress on much less effort, if that’s their choice. Just don’t kid yourself (or them) about what it really takes to reach the top.
BUCKEYE OPEN TABLE TENNIS TOURNAMENT, MARCH 13-14, 2004

$8,000 4-star TT tournament. Hosted by Butterfly! 40 Butterfly tables, orange Butterfly balls.

VENUE: Tower Tennis Fitness Ctr, Dublin, OH (ORI-270, St.Rt. 33W, .5 Mile W. on Post Rd @ Cosgray, Right) (614) 873-4242 (Columbus, OH)

All matches are RR or SE as indicated, Best of 5. Open is 4/7 to Semi, 5/9 there-after. Women, U 2600, Elite are 4/7 thru-out.

EVENTS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVENTS</th>
<th>S FEE</th>
<th>TROPHY:</th>
<th>$ OR AWARD</th>
<th>3 - 4</th>
<th>5 - 8</th>
<th>DATE/TIME</th>
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<td>$35</td>
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<td>$600</td>
<td>$300</td>
<td>$125</td>
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<td>2. HARD BAT RR OPEN, 2/3 21 pt</td>
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<td>23. JR. U-22 RR</td>
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<td>$50</td>
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<td>24. JR. U-14 RR</td>
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<td>25. U-4200 DOUBLES ***</td>
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<td>26. U-3400 DOUBLES ***</td>
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<td>$150</td>
<td>$80</td>
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</table>

* Special: Under 2009 rated players may enter Open for $15. ** Must specify partner. *** Prize based on 14 teams. No player may enter two events that start at the same time. Tournament director may limit events entered.

Qualty Inn Hotel Mention Buckeye Open TT BEFORE 28 FEBRUARY for discount rate. Phone reservation: (614) 764-0770

Directions to Qualty Inn Hotel: From I-270, S. On Sawmill, Right (West) on Tuller. From 3950 Tuller, Right. Dublin, OH 43017 (4 mi SW of Columbus)

Driving to venue: Tower Tennis, Dublin, OH (N. West side of Columbus, off I-270 ORT 270; go W. on St.Rt 33/161. Take Plain City/Post Rd. exits L.G. 5 mile. 50 Cosgray St turn R into kit.

See www.USATT.ORG web site for more info.. or Steve Slaback (614) 899-1415 slaback@columbus.rr.com Entry deadline is Thursday, March 4. Send check or money order payable to BOTTA. Mail payment with entry to Steve Slaback, 697 Waxwing Ct., Westerville, OH 43082-1074.

PLEASE CIRCLE EACH EVENT YOU ARE ENTERING:

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |

USATT # _________ Rating: (Must also specify for d bb) Birthdate: ____________________________

Doubles Event(s) Partner: ____________________________

USATT Membership: Adult: $30 yr, $75 3 yrs, JR/full time college student $20 yr, JR <14 $45 3 yr ______

Registration Fee: $6 (Add $10 if late) Tee shirt: $14 Circle: S M L XL XXL XXXL

Event Fees: $ ________ = Total Due: $ ________

Address: ____________________________

City, State, Zip: ____________________________

Phone: ( ) Email: ____________________________

I will abide by the rules of the USATT and will comply with the rulings of the tournament Director and referer. I exempt the tournament sponsors, the venue operators, and USA Table Tennis from any and all liability connected with this tournament.

Print Name CLEARLY: ____________________________ (Parent must sign for minor) Sign Name: ____________________________
Senior Corner

By Olga & Stan Kahan,
Co-Chairs, USATT Senior Committee
949-830-6699 (ph) · 949-240-7167 (fax)

Senior events were sprouting like mushrooms after a rainstorm in October, although there was precious little moisture in the Southwest during September and October. In the low desert in Hemet, California, an interesting competition, limited to seniors, ran for eighteen days, including most sports ranging from Bowling to Track and Field. This active senior event has the unusual name of OLYM.ics. Now, one must suggest to the organizing committee that despite their good will OLD is a relatively debatable name, even though some players “lymp” through their events. It was a gland – oops, grand event! Wilfredo Escobar was the chairperson at the table tennis affair, aided by the authors of this article as chief umpire and desk director of the draws (and Olga took gold in the over 70 Women Singles).

In the 50 and over, Ragnar Falilstiom, in his late sixties and known as “Ray” to his friends, prevailed against the youngsters to bring home the gold medal. Predominately young Ivan Slade, at 87, took gold in the over 80’s and over 70’s. A former member of the English National Team, he remembers when youngsters Dick Bergman and Johnny Leach moved into the team’s ranks. The former No. 17 ranked player in the world still uses his favorite Hock hardbat and chops his opponents down to size. Ivan later teamed with Stan Kahan to take the gold in the 70+ doubles against a determined team of Neil Smyth and “Blakie” Barlow. In case you meet Ivan at an event, just call him “twinkle toes,” a nickname bestowed on him 70 years and 70 pounds ago.

Fresh from the Hemet games, your authors ventured to St. George, Utah, for the Huntsman World Senior Games. The huge event was opened at a grand ceremony by the Governor of the State of Utah; its two-week series of events provided athletics and health screening, flu shots, and renewed acquaintanceships for players from all over the world. You will be reading a report on the games in this issue. So we will skip to other golden Olympics events.

In Southern California, five senior clubs met on Saturday, October 18 for a full day of singles, doubles, and team doubles, ranging in ages from 40 to over 90. The players, representing clubs from Laguna Woods Leisure World, Phoenix Club of Anaheim, Anaheim Senior Center, Irvine, and Seal Beach, were intermixed into four groups, all playing with teammates from other clubs. They were gastronomically named the Roman Pizzas, the Neapolitan Lasagnas, the Florentine Macaronis, and the Venetian Cannellonis. Fortunately, the delicious food served by the Leisure World gourmet hospitality was much lower in calories than the entrees. The Pizzas were triumphant, but the other entrees will be seeking revenge at the next course.

Do you have multiple groups in your area? Let us know! What a wonderful way to provide new playing partners, competition, and general camaraderie for the young at heart! Moreover, table tennis activities and regular training are excellent aerobic exercises and are also significant in promoting physical and mental health later in life.

In our country, we have many wonderful national coaches, such as Cheng Yinghua, Jack Huang, Larry Hodges, Barney Reed, Sr., and other USATT certified coaches. However, it would be great if more trainers could be available for the grassroot senior players, too.

In some clubs, the coaches have been training their senior members on a regular basis. For example, one USATT certified National Coach and Hall of Famer (Wei Wang) has been involved in a senior training program for many years in various parts of South California. Bella Livshin, one of the top over 50 women players, is actively engaged in training senior players in the Los Angeles Area. Nick Mintsyvins was busy teaching the young at heart for years. Now, Loc Ngo has taken a torch of responsibility for coaching in several senior clubs and retirement communities. It is very helpful for seniors to be trained by players (ranked 2000-2300) to raise significantly the quality of their play.

People are never too old to learn new tricks, to compete, and have fun!

A Happy New Year to you all and a fantastic journey to your success!

LETTERS FROM SWEDEN

Oct. 16, 2003

Dear Larry,

Hej! from Sweden. Things are going well in the U.S. expatriate table tennis community. Mark Nordby has gone home but Mark Hazinski will be staying with us for a couple of months. Jackie Lee is a short bus ride away and stops by frequently for American-style lunches. We have visited Whitney Ping in Köping, and vice versa; Laura is taking the train down (well, more like over; it’s west of here) to stay & work out with her next week. Junior training and competitions here are good. Last week we took a ferry across the Baltic with some of the Angby Ungdomsels (youth elite) to the Siga Junior Cup in Tallinn, Estonia. John won his age event without dropping a game; Laura took out the top Estonian girl in her age event and lost in the semi’s. But they got some exposure to eastern European players (Estonians, Russians, Latvians, Lithuanians, etc.) and it was a pleasant sightseeing trip.

Yesterday I came across a table tennis reference in the September 20 issue of The Economist (I’m a slow reader) in an obituary of Edward Teller, the “father of the hydrogen bomb,” who died on Sept. 9th at age 95. It’s on page 90. The last paragraph begins, “Mr Teller lived modestly. His pleasures were playing the piano and table tennis.” Hope things are going well for the Maryland club in general and for you in particular. Laura will see you in Baltimore, and the rest of us will see you in Vegas.

Martha Leach (John & Laura Leach’s mom)
**Meiklejohn National Seniors ★★★★★ Table Tennis Tournament- Over $15,000 in Prizes**

**June 3, 4, 5, 6, 2004 Leisure World, Laguna Woods, California: Clubhouse 5**

<table>
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<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Under 1100 RR</td>
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<td>2. Over 80 RR</td>
<td>10:00 am</td>
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<td>3. Over 90 RR</td>
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<td>4. Women over 60 RR</td>
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<td>5. Under 2300 Doubles</td>
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<td>T</td>
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<td>8. Under 1450 RR</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Over 75 Doubles</td>
<td>3:00 pm</td>
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| **Friday, June 4** | | | |
| 10. Under 1200 RR | 9:00 am | T | T | $12 |
| 11. Over 75 RR | 10:00 am | T | T | T | T | $10 |
| 12. Women over 50 RR | 10:00 am | 300 | 150 | 50 | 50 | T | T | $15 |
| 13. Under 1300 | 11:00 am | T | T | T | T | $11 |
| 14. Over 70 | 11:30 am | 100 | 50 | 25 | 25 | $14 |
| 15. Over 70 Doubles | 12:00 pm | T | T | T | T | $10 |
| 16. Women over 40 RR | 12:00 pm | 400 | 200 | 50 | 50 | $16 |
| 17. Hardbat RR | 12:30 pm | 300 | 150 | 50 | 50 | $15 |
| 18. Over 60 | 1:00 pm | 300 | 150 | 50 | 50 | $15 |
| 19. Senior Elites RR Minimum rating 2000 | 2:00 pm | 600 | 300 | 150 | 150 | 50 | $22 |
| 20. Under 4500 Doubles | 4:00 pm | T | T | T | T | $17 |

| **Saturday, June 5** | | | |
| 21. Draw Doubles | 8:30 am | 400 | 200 | T | T | T | T | $17 |
| 22. Over 50 | 10:00 am | 350 | 150 | 75 | 75 | $18 |
| 23. Under 2400 RR | 11:00 am | 600 | 300 | 100 | 100 | $20 |
| 24. Under 1800 | 12:00 pm | 100 | 50 | 25 | 25 | $13 |
| 25. Under 1600 RR | 1:00 pm | 50 | 50 | T | T | $13 |
| 26. Under 3400 Doubles Single max 2000 | 3:00 pm | 200 | 100 | 50 | 50 | $15 |

| **Sunday, June 6** | | | |
| 27. Under 4200 Doubles | 9:00 am | 200 | 100 | 50 | 50 | $16 |
| 28. Under 1900 RR | 9:30 am | 100 | 50 | 25 | 25 | $16 |
| 29. Under 4800 Doubles | 10:30 am | 500 | 300 | 100 | 100 | $18 |
| 30. Over 40 Singles | 11:00 am | 1500 | 1000 | 500 | 500 | 150 | $22 |
| 31. Under 2050 | 12:00 pm | 150 | 75 | 50 | 50 | $15 |
| 32. Under 2300 | 1:00 pm | 400 | 200 | 75 | 75 | $19 |

Send a check, payable to NSTTA and an entry form to:
Ray Kunze
110 Via Estrada Unit B
Laguna Woods, CA 92653-4011
Email: rkkunze@fea.net

**Meiklejohn Entry Form (Please Print)**

<table>
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<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>State/Zip</th>
<th>ExpDate</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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Main Club at which you play:

Enter me in the events listed below. I will abide by all regulations of the sponsors and the USATT. I relieve the sponsors and the USATT of any liability for injury to myself or to my property.

Signature: __________________________________________________________________________

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<th>Doubles Partner</th>
<th>Fee No.</th>
<th>Name of Event</th>
<th>Doubles Partner</th>
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</table>

**Total Events Fees**

| Membership | $4.00 | Rating Fee | $15.00 | USATT |

**Total Events Fees**

| $30.00 per year or $7.00 one-time pass. | $20.00 | CTT Hall of Fame Dinner (optional) |

**TOTAL FEES**

---

**Accommodations**

Ayres Hotel, 24341 El Toro Road, Laguna Woods, CA 92653, (800) 594-8412: free airport shuttle and full breakfast; a special rate of $89.00 per night for reservations made before May 14, 2003.

**Directions**

Laguna Woods is 10 miles south of the Santa Ana Airport (Orange County Airport) via the 405 and 5 Freeways. Exit at El Toro and continue south 2.5 miles to Gate 9 at Calle Corta. Ask the guard at the gate for directions to Clubhouse 5.

**Eligibility**

Players must be 40 or over by December 31, 2003, and legal US, or Canadian residents. Players whose USATT memberships expire before the end of the tournament, must include membership fees with their entry forms.

**Rules**

All rules of the USATT will govern and be enforced. Players must wear their player numbers on their playing floor. Games will be 11 points; matches will be 5 games, except for the semis and finals of the Over 40 Singles, which will be 4 of 7.

**Equipment**

Stiga and Butterfly tables and orange Nittaku 40 millimeter balls.

**Application Dates and Cutoff**

All entries and fees should be postmarked by Friday, May 7, 2004; for late entries, there is a fee of $15.00 and no guarantee of acceptance. Entries postmarked after May 14 will be rejected.

**Ratings**

Ratings are the USATT ratings listed in the March-April issue of the USA Table Tennis Magazine. Players without ratings may participate in all events except rated doubles but may only advance in age except for the Over 40 Singles which will be 4 of 7.

**Kunze, Ray**
Dear Editor,

This letter refers to the Nov/Dec 2003 USATT Magazine. A couple of features caused me to raise my eyebrows in amazement.

First, Azmy Ibrahim devotes half a page to a parade of horribles from some recent overseas trip as an official. I have probably done as much international travel as anyone in the USATT, and I never left for overseas without knowing where I was going and what I was going to do when I got there. This pathetic recitation by Dr. Ibrahim makes me wonder about the people representing USATT abroad. The problem now was who would take us to the hotel. The buses do not go there. By then we were sitting in one of the buses and it was not going anywhere. Really? If the buses didn’t go to the hotel, why did this group of officials get on the bus and simply sit there? If our association sends officials overseas to represent USATT, let’s hope they have more presence of mind and moxie than is shown in Dr. Ibrahim’s article.

Second, Tong Lee devotes most of a page (Treasurer’s Report) to a rambling discourse, which is clearly aimed at the general membership, accusing them of being cheapskates. He concludes by saying that “politicians” (read general membership) “should stop complaining that the membership fee is too high, and stop criticizing decision makers when they raise fees.” I have not heard anyone, politician or otherwise, complain that membership fees are too high. Rating fees have increased, and I haven’t heard any complaints about that, either. Mr. Tong Lee says “They” (the ubiquitous “they”) must be a large number who are willing to pay a fair membership fee and who are willing to renew it when their membership expires.” All right, Mr. Tong Lee, WHAT IS a “fair membership fee”?

I seem to recall the last election, where the candidate for Treasurer was full of golden words about how financial and fiscal responsibility would accrue following his election. Instead, we get ravings that it is, after all, our (membership) fault that the USATT is in such dire financial straits.

I do not believe it is the role of the USATT Treasurer to hectour the general membership over their stewardship — or lack thereof — of the USATT. I believe the Treasurer should work with USATT’s governing body to address what he — Tong Lee — perceives as a “financial quagmire.”

Sincerely,
John G. Vos
203 Indian Head Avenue, Indian Head, MD 20640, pingpong@erols.com

The Treasurer Responds...

I appreciate the opportunity to respond to the comments of Mr. John Vos.

In Part II of my report, I tried to explain to the membership that their membership dues contribute to only a fraction of the cost it takes to provide them with a first-rate magazine, costly liability insurance for sanctioned events, and the various costs of running the association. My intent was to make the membership understand that the money USATT has to spend on these services for clubs and members takes away from the money USATT could use to promote the sport and to contribute to the development of elite athletes. I also wanted to change the erroneous perception that might have been propagated regularly in public forums by certain people whom I referred to as politicians. My hope was that, with a better understanding of the budget, all members would be willing to do their part in getting out of this “financial quagmire” that has plagued the Association since it started charging a membership fee of $0.25.

I am sorry that Mr. Vos mis-interpreted my “rambling discourse” and came to several questionable conclusions. Let me clarify:

First, I never accused the general membership of being cheapskates. Second, by politicians (not necessarily table tennis related), I meant those regularly involved in the public debate with whom they disagree with. In table tennis, they also regularly make public comments, often without facts to back them up in hope of influencing USATT policy, but often end up misleading others. Third, as to what is a fair membership fee, how about the median or the mode of the fees charged by the 21 NGBs I mentioned? Last, but not least, in this context, “financial quagmire” refers to a state in which fees cannot cover expenses for Headquarters and the magazine. For your information, USATT has never been financially better than it is now. I am confident that the tax return of FY2003 will prove this.

Microsoft did not become one of the world’s most valuable companies (and Bill Gates the world’s richest man) without raising prices regularly, in spite of growing profits. Similarly, running USATT like a business includes continually finding ways to increase revenue and profits, so as to better address USATT needs and goals. I am merely doing my part in an overall effort to implement a more dynamic business and marketing approach in the governance of USATT, and I do not like politicians getting in the way.

Tong Lee, USATT Treasurer

STIGA CANADIAN JUNIOR OPEN ON THE ITTF WORLD JUNIOR CIRCUIT

Edmonton, Canada - Aug. 28-31, 2003 - By Coach Lily Yip

It was my pleasure to work with the U.S. Junior and Cadet Teams at the recent ITTF Junior Circuit Tournament held in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada this past August. All the junior players were wonderful and they made me feel so young, as if I were one of the players. We all worked well together, and displayed a lot of team spirit and camaraderie. Everyone supported everyone else in all the matches, no matter which division they were in. The Cadets supported the Juniors and the Juniors supported the Cadets.

Dennis Davis and I were the only two coaches, so we could not coach every player during the tournament, so some of the matches were coached by the players themselves.

Adam Hugh coached the junior boys against the Korean number two team and they won 3-2. Mark, Han and Misha and the whole Junior and Cadet girls teams gave Adam full support during his singles semifinal match.

All the girls - Whitney, Kathy, Jackie and Sophie - showed great fight in their matches, never once did I see them give up.

Mark Hazinski and Han Xiao not only played well but showed great sportsmanship throughout their matches. I remember one match that Mark played where the other player must have gotten a least eight nets during one game. Mark never complained and kept playing with great concentration.

This is the first time our juniors defeated the Koreans in Team competition. Adam and Misha defeated the Korean number two team on their way to a bronze medal in the Cadet doubles and team events. Judy and Lani also took one point against the Korean number one Team in the final of the team event.

Judy and Lani played very well in doubles and won a bronze medal in that event.

I am also so proud of Judy for her wonderful comebacks in the singles, being down 8-10 in the fifth game of the semifinals to the Korean #2 player and then defeating the Canadian #1 player in the final, 3-0.

I am very proud of our Junior and Cadet Teams. I believe this new generation is the best ever.

2002 PLAYERS OF THE YEAR By Larry Hodges

Gao Jun and Han Xiao. both of Gaithersburg, MD, were named by the USOC as the 2002 Female and Male Players of the Year. (Yes - 2002, a “late” announcement.)

Gao, 34, who is currently training and competing in China, in 2002 won women’s singles and doubles at the USA Nationals for the seventh straight year, won women’s singles at the North American Championships, and finished first at the USA Team Trials. (She also started off 2003 with a bang, winning gold medals for women’s singles & doubles at the Pan Am Games, finishing first at the USA Team Trials, and making the Quarterfinals of women’s singles at the World Championships.) She ended the year rated 2632, #1 among women in the U.S.

Han, 16, in 2002 won men’s doubles (with his coach, Cheng Yinghua) at the USA Nationals (at age 15), made the quarterfinals in singles, and won or made the final of a number of junior and under 22 events in various tournaments. He was also the youngest player, at 15, to make the final draw in men’s singles at the U.S. Open ITTF Pro Tour event, and the youngest USA player ever to do so. His highest rating during the year was 2553.
**Tournament Information**

**Tournament Venue:** Ben Hill Recreation Center, 2405 Fairburn Road, Atlanta, Georgia 30331. Tel: (516) 359-3617

**Tournament Committee:** Michael Lalvani (Tournament Director), Renuka Lalvani, Edmund K. Suen, Roman Tinyzin

**Tournament Referee:** Roman Tinyzin (RU), Michael Lalvani (RU)

**Equipment:** Spintech/Joola Tables & Nets and Spintech 3-star white Elite 40 mm balls will be used. Gymnasium floor: wood

**Directions:** From North: At I-285 Exit 5B, take Ramp (Right) onto SR-166 [Campbellton Road SW] towards GA-166/Campbellton Rd/Ben Hill. (0.8 miles). Turn Left (South) onto Fairburn Avenue SW (0.1) mile. Arrive 2405 Fairburn Road SW, Atlanta, GA 30331.

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*Players with rating under 2000 can enter the Open RR for $20 event fee + rating & registration fee.
**GC = Gift Certificate; C = Certificate. RR = Round Robin Format; SE = Single Elimination Format. *** Maximum rating of a player cannot exceed 1950. All matches are 3 out of 5 games except for events 1 & 2 SE which are 4 out of 7 games. Tournament committee reserves the right to modify prize money and/or cancel any event if there are insufficient entries. No prize money shall be awarded for splits and/or unfinished matches. NO EXCEPTIONS!!!

**ENTRY DEADLINE:** Entries must be postmarked latest by February 15, 2004. Late entries will be accepted with a $10.00 late fee subject to space availability.

**ENTRY POLICY/RATINGS:** All entries must include full payment in order to be included in the draw(s). USATT ratings as of February 15, 2004 will be used.

**ELIGIBILITY:** All players must be USATT members. Please bring your USATT membership card or receipt. Non-members must join USATT at the tournament. Junior players must be 12 as of the tourney date. Senior players must be 40 by Dec 31, '04. Unrated players may play in any singles event, but unrated RR group winner will not be allowed to advance.

**DEFAULT POLICY:** All USATT regulations apply. Must abide to USATT Dress Code. Players not registered within 10 minutes after starting time of the event may be defaulted from that event and without refund of entry fee. If a rating event is canceled, player will automatically be placed in the next higher event. Maximum number of events is 16.

**REFUND POLICY:** Players will be refunded for entry fees at least one week prior to tournament dates selected. Refunds will not be given for any withdrawals after that date except when event rating is too high for a desired event and he or she chooses not to be promoted to the next highest event. Phone/Email entries are responsible for full entry fees if not withdrawn at least one week prior to start of tournament date selected. No refund for no-show participants!

**USATT AFFILIATED SPONSORING CLUB:** Spinners Table Tennis Club

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**Registration Form: 2004 Spin Open**

**FIRST:** [Type] **LAST:** [Type] **DOB:** [Type] **EMAIL:** [Type] **GENDER:** MALE / FEMALE

**ADDRESS:** [Type] **CITY:** [Type] **STATE:** [Type] **ZIP:** [Type] **PHONE:** [Type]

**USATT#:** [Type] **EXPDATE:** [Type] **RATING:** [Type] **DOUBLES PARTNER:** [Type] **NEW USATT MEMBER** [ ]

**ATTENTION:** Please CIRCLE event(s) entered: 1 2

Please send completed entry form and make check/money order payable to:

Spintech Table Tennis, Inc.
5805 State Bridge Road, Suite G 363
Duluth, GA 30097
Sales: (610) 359-3817; Fax: (770) 476-7185
Email: michael@espintech.com Website: www.espintech.com

**Deadline:** Postmarked by February 15, 2004

All returned checks will be charged a $25 fee

**Total Event Entry Fees:** $[Type]
**Rating & Registration Fee:** $6.00
**Tourney T-shirt ($10.00):**
**USATT Membership Fee:**

**Total Amount Due:** $[Type]

By my participation, I hereby relieve the sponsors: USATT, Spintech, Ben Hill Recreation Center and tournament committee of any liabilities for injury to myself and/or property damage or loss. I agree to comply with all decisions of the tournament officials. I will abide by all USATT regulations.

Signature (Parent/Guardian if minor): [Type]

For Official Use Only: Cash Check M/O

Received by: [Type] Check in: [Type] Saturday [Type] Sunday
In Memoriam
John T. Boyle, Sr.
By Richard Hicks and Russ Forthofer

John Boyle, longtime proprietor of the Indianapolis Table Tennis Center, passed away on August 18, 2003, at age 73, after being seriously ill for several months. John had played table tennis for over 50 years. His love for table tennis was obvious to all who knew him. He took great pleasure in sharing that love of the game with others. He treated every player with respect, and expected anyone who visited the club to do the same. John was always ready to provide encouragement to the discouraged player, or a pat on the back to the player who earned it.

John had owned and operated the table tennis center since 1982. He kept it going through some very difficult situations, and always strived to make the club better. John had a special talent for helping and encouraging new players and for promoting and running leagues. His efforts were very much appreciated, and he will be missed by the Indianapolis table tennis community.

In Memoriam
Simon "Sy" Kenig
By Tim Boggan,
USATT Historian

Stan Robens called to tell me that his lifelong friend Sy Kenig, who'd been in a rest home suffering from Parkinson's and other ailments affecting his hearing and speech, took a bad fall onto concrete and died at the age of 84.

I'm sure USATT members who knew Sy, especially those whose games he took an interest in, offer their sympathies to his wife and son.

Years ago Sy had left Poland and, after a stint in the Russian Army, had made his way to Germany where he met his wife Sally. On coming to the States, he settled in Arizona and began to make a name for himself in the Sport there, even built a special table tennis room in his home. Perhaps he didn't have the desire to travel much, or circumstances didn't permit it, but occasionally he'd be at a U.S. Open in nearby San Diego at the '67 U.S. Open, for example, he won the Senior Consolation's, and nearly 20 years later he was runner-up in the U.S. Open Over 60's to George Hendry.

"He taught everybody in Arizona to play," said Stan, "including his son Bill [National B Doubles Champion in 1980] and other well-known players like Johnny Merkel [National U-1750 Champion in 1977]. "Room after room in his house was filled with trophies," Stan remembered, and many a Sunday for years and years the two practiced together. "With his phantom on one side and Chinese rubber on the other," there was no one in Arizona he couldn't beat. "He really became a legend there," said Stan.

Brooklyn Table Tennis Club
By Tahl Leibovitz

If you're in NYC and you're looking for the biggest and best table tennis club around you'll probably find yourself in Brooklyn at 2200 Coney Island Avenue, the Brooklyn Table Tennis Club. The club boasts nine professional playing tables and one practice table with a Newgy Robot.

The Brooklyn Table Tennis club is run and owned by Nison Aronov with the generous help of Michael Patin. Mr. Patin has been playing table tennis for a number of years. When I first played him I thought he was just a novice player, but he took some games off me. He's got good serves and tries to kill every ball. He even tries to kill the ball before it reaches his side. He's a very good practice player.

I'm sure many of you know Nison Aronov. He is an incredibly gifted player with the best off the table topspin defense in the country. He not only won countless titles in Russia as a junior and a professional player, his most recent successes (ironically) have been with me at the U.S. National where we made the semi-finals two years in a row. Last year we defeated the top-seeded team of Eric Owens and Jim Butler. (Of course, I had to throw that in!)

Now, on with the table tennis club, its surroundings and environment. One thing I really enjoy about the club are the fine restaurants in the area. They have some very good Indian and Mediterranean food. The club itself has the best space in New York City and a lot of room to practice as well as play matches. Some of the best players in the country are members, including me, Nison, De Tran, Bogdan Kucherenko, and Slava Golth, a chopper rated over 2400. So one thing is for sure, you'll definitely find your share of competition. I was getting very good practice for a while. Then the long awaited table tennis league started.

My practice just got better! The league is held every Thursday. (Hopefully we could team up with the USATT League). It's open to players of all levels. Even if your level is 900, you can play against some of the top players. It's up to you which division you want to enter. The league raised my game to an even higher level. You'll always find me at the league every Thursday as well as many other top players.

Another great thing about the table tennis club is the top level coaching of Nison. Every time I do a training session with him, my game peaks. Nison is a great coach, with a lot of drive and tons of experience from playing professionally over the years. He utilizes that experience to further enhance the level of all his students.

The bottom line is that The Brooklyn Table Tennis Club is a very relaxing environment where you are able to play your best table tennis without interruption. You can take it easy and play for fun, or train extremely hard. The club is adaptable for every playing condition.

So if you're looking to just get in shape, practice a bit or play really serious, I'll be there to take you down. Good luck!
3rd Annual STIGA 4-STAR “CARY CUP” OPEN
Cary, North Carolina: March 19-21, 2004
Friday Doubles and Hardbat Events; Saturday Giant Mixed RR Singles
Sunday Women’s Only Giant RR Singles; 30 Tables;
Ideal Playing Conditions

For Registration Forms and More Information go to:
http://www.carytta.org/tournament.htm
**First Come, First Serve**

Pre-Registration/Pre-payment Required in Advance
(suggest doing this now before the tourney fills-up)
For more information see website (above) or email
mike.babuin@townofcary.org
or call (919) 462-3931 (o) for more info

2003 USATT COACH OF THE YEAR AWARDS
By Tommy Perkins

At the November USATT Board Meeting, nominations were passed around to select USATT’s National and Developmental Coach of the Year Awards. The board voted based on nominations submitted and coaching achievements. The results were as follows:

National Coach of the Year
Teodor Gheorghe,
USATT National Women’s Team Coach
Teodor “Doru” Gheorghe’s most astounding accomplishments this year was coaching Gao Jun to the quarterfinals (first time since 1959 an American reached the quarterfinals iningles) at the 2003 World Championships in Paris, which placed her in the top 20 in the world and qualified her for the Athens Olympic Games. He also led the National Women’s Team in Santo Domingo at the 2003 Pan Am Games to Gold and Bronze in Singles, and Gold and Silver in Doubles.
Honorable Mention: Sean O’Neill

Developmental Coach of the Year
Mitchell Seidenfeld,
USATT Regional Certified Coach
Mitch Seidenfeld carries many titles including Program Director for Table Tennis Minnesota, USATT North Regional Coaching Director, and Midwest Regional Coordinator for the National Schools Program for Table Tennis. Mitch is responsible for six different Coaching Programs in 2003 that are run on a continuous basis, which include various age groups and playing levels. Mitch has also coached three Minnesota State Champions, not including the Men’s Singles competition he himself won. In addition to that, Mitch’s students won numerous medals at the Junior Olympics and Junior Nationals in Detroit, MI, and two medals at the National Senior Olympics in Virginia Beach, VA.
Honorable Mention: Dennis Davis

USATT would like to thank and congratulate the “2003 Coaches of the Year” for their success, outstanding commitment, and support to the sport of Table Tennis and its athletes. USATT would also like to thank those athletes who took the time to submit nominations for their coaches and the abundance of coaches who voluntarily give their time to share their knowledge of the sport of Table Tennis.

USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE • January/February 2004
NCTTA ENTERS THE FALL SEASON WITH SMASHING NEWS
By Tzu-Wei Lin, Public Relations Director, NCTTA

Following the addition of six new divisions this past summer, growth is still the main theme of the National Collegiate Table Tennis Association as the Internal Revenue Services officially recognized this student-run organization as a publicly supported 509(a)(1) organization under the 501(c)(3) non-profit category. As a result, NCTTA is eligible to generate tax-deductible receipts for our donors.

In response to the positive direction of the league, NCTTA has secured a table tennis equipment sponsorship with STIGA and the Table Tennis Pioneers, who will offer student discounts to NCTTA members. For details, please visit the sponsorship page at www.nctta.org/Sponsorship.htm and the Table Tennis Pioneers at www.ping-pong.com.

Amidst all the developments, division meets commenced as 83 member schools launched their campaign to qualify for the prestigious National Championships. Meets began in October, with the heart of the competition taking place in November. This year’s inaugural meet took place on October 26, where University of Florida (UF) looked to defend its division title against its rivals. UF’s team captain, Lee Gary, depicted the meet as “a testament to the growth of the division and mirrored the general expansion of NCTTA as a whole.” Ultimately, host UF would defeat Florida State University in a decisive 5-0 victory.

Moving north to New England, last year’s runner-up, Harvard University, and eight other teams visited MIT for its fall meet on November 1. Harvard, having lost five of its six varsity team players, confronted powerhouse MIT, Northeastern University, Boston University (BU), and Wesleyan University in what New England Division Director Andrew Holm described as “the tightest race [for a trip to the Nationals] in recent memory.” New England boast some of the top college players in the nation, with Harvard ace Anton Titov, MIT captain Ron Choy, and BU freshmen and Singapore National Junior team member Hanloong Ma facing off in NCTTA’s most competitive division. Even though MIT triumphed in this meet, the large nature of this division would allow two teams to travel to the Nationals, thus only intensifying the battle to a higher level.

Around the league, Virginia Tech won their respective division meet, which entertained an international flavor of participants from twenty different countries! Of note, the division welcomed a woman-only team from Virginia Tech. Duke University also made a strong statement in the Carolina division by dominating all other teams 5-0, with team members that include the twins Jackson and Patrick Musker, who were trained by USATT Hall of Famer Wei Wang. Southern Mississippi would also triumph the first ever Dixie Division meet, boasting such players as Korean National Junior team member Kim Bong Geun and Tiger Narasimhan, who’s ranked #2 in Mississippi.

At this point, we are already looking forward to the 2004 NCTTA National Championships. Please visit our website at www.nctta.org and give us any feedback. NCTTA continues to welcome any sponsorship inquiries in supporting our 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and all the special student athletes involved in our beloved sport.

NCTTC Current Standings

Virginia Division: 1st Virginia Tech 2nd University of Virginia 3rd James Madison University 4th Bluefield College 5th Eastern Mennonite University

Florida Division: 1st University of Florida 2nd Florida State University 3rd University of North Florida 4th University of West Florida 5th University of Central Florida

Carolina Division: 1st Duke University 2nd North Carolina State University 3rd Methodist College 4th University of North Carolina at Wilmington

Dixie Division: 1st Southern Miss 2nd Mississippi State 3rd Univ. Of South Alabama 4th West Florida

Mid-Atlantic Division: 1st Princeton University 2nd University of Pennsylvania 3rd Pennsylvania State University at University Park 4th Howard University

Upstate NY Division: 1st Cornell Univ. 2nd Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute 3rd Hamilton College

From Willy Leparulo,
New ACUI Table Tennis Director

I am extremely honored to take over as the new Table Tennis National Director for the Association of College Unions International (ACUI, www.acui.org). I have been involved in college table tennis for the past four years under various capacities, including as the Recruiting Director and Florida Division Director for the National Collegiate Table Tennis Association (NCTTA, www.nctta.org). I have also brought several table tennis tournaments to Florida State University campus, where I currently hold the position of Academic Coordinator. Through these personal activities, I have clearly seen a recent resurgence in college table tennis. Therefore my main goal is to build upon that momentum and continue the rapid growth of this sector of our beloved sport.

ACUI is a nonprofit organization that encourages the students to participate in various sport activities through their respective schools’ chapters. ACUI mainly organizes two major table tennis events: singles and doubles matches, at regional and national levels. As the ACUI Director I will try my best to connect the resources between ACUI and NCTTA, especially through the help of people who have been the biggest supporters of college table tennis. I have already started some major planning for this coming ACUI season and will make it the best ever! For any questions and concerns, please feel free to contact me at leparulo@fsu.edu.
For information on your region, contact the person below. If you aren’t sure of your region, contact the one that seems closest, or National Coordinator Willy Leparulo.

National Coordinator:  
Willy Leparulo,  
we9284@garnet.acns.fsu.edu, (850) 383-1553

Region 1 - Feb. 22, 2004  
Northeastern University, in Boston, MA  
Contact: Mike Durkin,  
michael.durkin@merrimack.edu, (978) 837-5508  
Includes: CT, ME, MA, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, NH, Nova Scotia, RI, VT, Prince Edward Island

Region 2 - TBA  
Contact: William Hare-clerroad,  
harelew@alfredstate.edu  
Includes: Eastern Ontario, NY, Quebec

Region 3 - Feb. 21, 2004  
William Paterson University, Wayne, NJ  
Contact: Manny Kohli,  
kohliw@wpunj.edu, (973) 720-3676  
Includes: DE, NJ, New York City, Philadelphia, Long Island

Region 4 - Feb. 20-22, 2004  
Penn State University in State College, PA  
Contact: Jeffrey Waple,  
waple@clarion.edu, (814) 393-2311  
Includes: Washington DC, Northern VA, MD, WV, PA(except Philadelphia)  
http://region4.acuiweb.org/region/04/programs/rec.asp

Region 5 - Feb. 20-22, 2004  
University of Tennessee at Knoxville  
Contact: Table Tennis Coordinator  
Seemant Teotia, ratings@nettta.org  
Includes: KY, NC, SC, TN, VA  
http://region5.acuiweb.org/region/05/tabletennis.htm

Region 6 - Feb. 11-13, 2004  
University of Florida in Gainesville, FL  
Contact: Table Tennis Coordinator  
Lee Gary, Igary@ncita.org  
Includes: FL, GA, MS, AL, Puerto Rico and Bermuda  
http://region6.acuiweb.org/region/06/

Region 7 - Feb. 14-15, 2004  
University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, MI  
Contact: Betsy Sundholm,  
sundholm@umich.edu  
Includes: Ohio, Michigan (except the upper peninsula), Southwestern Ontario  
http://region7.acuiweb.org/region/07/

Region 8 - Feb. 20-22, 2004  
University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee, WI  
Contact: Lori Erickson,  
lerickson@matcmadison.edu  
(608) 246-6227  
Includes: Chicago Metro area, MI (upper peninsula) and WI

Region 9 - Feb. 14-15, 2004  
At Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville in Edwardsville, IL  
Contact: Steve Siegel,  
ssiegel@ieee.org  
Includes: IL (except for Chicago Metro Area), Indiana  
http://region9.acuiweb.org/region/09/

Region 10 - Feb. 7-8, 2004  
St Cloud State Univ. in St Cloud, MN.  
Contact: John Alcorn,  
alcorn@southwestmn.edu, (507) 537-7330  
Includes: IA, Manitoba, MN, ND, SD, and Western Ontario  
http://region10.acuiweb.org/region/10/index.htm

Region 11 - Feb. 7-8, 2004  
Boise State University  
Contact: Rick Sedgwick,  
sedgwicr@wou.edu, (208) 868-8686  
Includes: AK, Alberta, British Columbia, ID, MT, OR, WA, and Saskatchewan

Region 12 - Feb. 20-22, 2004  
University of Houston in Houston, TX  
Contact: Nevil Shed,  
msned@utexas.edu, (512) 458-7365  
Includes: AR, LA, TX

Region 13 - Feb. 19-21, 2004  
The University of Wyoming in Laramie, WY  
Contact: Jeff C Davis,  
jdavis@uwyo.edu  
Includes: Arizona, Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, and Wyoming  

Region 14 - Feb. 20-21, 2004  
Boise State University  
Contact: Rick Sedgwick,  
sedgwicr@wou.edu, (208) 868-8686  
Includes: Alaska, Alberta, British Columbia, ID, MT, OR, WA, and Saskatchewan

Region 15 - Feb. 20-22, 2004  
Univ. of California at Davis, CA  
Contact: Eric Murakami,  
emurakami@csulb.edu  
Includes: Nevada, California, Hawaii, Australia, Guam  
http://region15.acui.org/region/15/

Breaking News...

As the magazine is about to print, we wish to congratulate our new National Champions:

Men’s Singles:  
Ilija Lupulesku

Women’s Singles:  
Jasna Reed

Men’s Doubles:  
Ilija Lupulesku/David Huang

Women’s Doubles:  
Jasna Reed/Tawny Bank

Mixed Doubles:  
Ilija Lupulesku/Jasna Reed

As well as our 54 other National Champions!

Happy Holidays from USA Table Tennis!
STILL EXCITING.

STILL ENTERTAINING.

STILL ENERGIZING.

STILL THE BEST WAY

to get away.

LAS VEGAS

FREEDOM TO GET AWAY FROM IT ALL
**NOT JUST WHISTLING DIXIE**

By Tim Boggan

Houshang Bozorgzadeh, the former Iranian World Consolation Champion and later the well-known U.S. Team Captain and Coach, once told me about the importance of shadow practice, and how some clubs he'd been to put five or six mirrors up, like in a ballet school, that you might learn and improve the vision you have of yourself as a player. Who would have thought that in silently practicing so, you could be helped not only by your eyes, but by your ears?

Well, Jerome Kane did. Years ago he ingeniously developed what he calls, and you'll see why in a moment, a “Whistling Racket” – to be used in shadow practice as a USATT-approved table tennis training tool. Now, at age 80, with Patent #4,635,935 about to expire, Jerome (jkttpatent@webtv.net) wants to sell it at a token price, so that his invention can get into the marketplace where, as he says, “its potential could be realized.”

He himself, when he was young and shadow practicing his strokes in front of a mirror, was struck by the swish of the racket as he came through. Imagine if there were whistles on the racket, he thought – and, as if he'd heard a signal, an idea was born.

The whistles, say three, are positioned into the top part of the racket in a spherical housing so that “the pitch and the duration of the sound vary in accordance with velocity.” This means that “one can hear the speed of his racket, and can tell by this method even small changes in racket speed, which he would not recognize with any of the other senses.”

Hope to teach your children to listen? The rackets come in two sizes – standard and paddleball size (for children or adults). The entire racket, for close tolerances, is “stamp-punched” – cut from birch or similar plywood with holes for the whistles. Jerome says he's swung these rackets “thousands of times, and never did the whistles come loose.” He may be 80, but, like all modern table tennis aficionados, he knows the dangers of sniffing glue, so he had a professional cabinetmaker spray the glue on in a factory setting.

Want to judge and so speed up your reaction time? But want to realize, too, that certain strokes are best done smoothly with change of pace in mind rather than a Tiger Woods-like acceleration? These adjustable whistle-rackets are timing tools, not just novelty items to please your kids.

Never mind that serious shadow play takes effort; now, by jiminy, it's whistle while you work.
For six Thanksgiving Day weekends now, pilgrim players have come to Richard Lee’s well-run Stiga North American Teams Championships, that Baltimore Convention Center colony of the table tennis like-minded, where all attend services with what you might call religious zeal. In a sense, these Inner Harbor arrivals all wear the same recognizable clothes—their comparative Team ratings (summed, for seeding purposes, according to the ratings of their Team’s top 3 players). Careful placing of the most powerful of the 200 Teams (a record entry) allows experienced Tournament Director Fong Hsu to begin play—with almost 800 competitors spread out over 150 brand new Stiga tables. Three (Friday-Saturday-Sunday) Stages of play, each following a different format, will lead us—our pilgrimage here—to a $6,000 Champion.

On Friday the four top seeded teams are excused from play and await the winners of 16 Preliminary groups whose teams have been both seeded and placed (see Web version for snake system details). Each tie consists of best 5 out of 9 singles matches among the 3 players on a team.

Championship Preliminary Play

Advancing were 14 of the 16 Group A teams, 10 of whom won both their ties by the apparently uncontested scores of 5-0 or 5-1—oh, alright, so I include in this grouping the exceptional: Manhattan Club Impresario Jerry Wartski (1340) joining Atanda Musa (2573) and Li Yuxiang (2555) for some 5-2 fun; no struggle to advance there.

Of course 5-0 scores sometimes don’t reveal the depths of a two-team struggle. Case in point: the USA Junior Boys 1 vs. Penn State 1. Han Xiao defeated Richard Hicks, 18 in the 5th—Dick noting the loss in the record book he keeps of his annual play in this Championship. (Yep, he’s been playing in the Team’s since ’59.)

Misha Kazantsev (after losing the first two games at 10) defeated Srinivasan Ramanathan, 11-9 in the 5th. Adam Hugh also defeated left-hander Ramanathan 11-9 in the 5th, winning the 4th 15-13 (after being down 3 match points).
points). Though gritty Adam was too often soft against Ramanathan, he was hard on himself – and LOUD, exhorting himself again and again to TRY, TRY, TRY! to PLAY, PLAY. What some people were saying about Adam’s exhortations to self I’ll not even try to slip by Editor Hodges. Quote of the week, though, comes to me from Danny Seemiller, now with his new beard definitely a grizzled veteran, er, senior. What, acknowledging to me Adam’s roars, does Coach Danny say? “You really can’t yell like that every point.” “Even in the end game?” I ask, remembering Danny’s all-out highly exclamatory matches with my younger son Eric. To which he just smiles.

In a 5-2 losing-effort, Spin Doctor #1 Shuja Jafir-Ali (2279) upset (well, not too much – “Having fun, that’s always #1 with me!”) Ashil Jain (2451). Before he’d joined this Nison Aronov Brooklyn Club team, Jain had recently taken an 8-month hiatus from the Game – needed both to rest an injured Achilles tendon and oversee the family’s furniture business. However, now that he’s back, Ashu will later beat some Elite players. Shuja teammate Bogdan Kucharenko says that after he won the Junior National’s, his Brighton Beach Long Island Club closed and he stopped playing for 5 years. But, like so many others, he couldn’t resist returning. (Among the players here I remember decades ago competing as kids were Ohioan Sandy Potiker, 1954 Canadian National Exhibition Boys Champ, and Mark Radom, 1962 U.S. Open Under 13 Champion.) Nison, who I saw return a ball from a prostrate position that his opponent whiffed, says his Club is very nice (“Everything like Eastern Europe”) and invites all to participate in his Jan. 10-11 tournament.

In a striking instance of a C Group team challenging an A Group team, the New York TTC Ball Busters, though losing 5-2, badly roughed up the Asian Gang members – with 6 of the 7 matches going into the 5th before Tuan Le and Stephen Nguyen finally carried the day. This battered Asian Gang was then 5-2 beat up and left for dead by the U.S. Women’s team...though Simone Yang, sometimes jumping with both feet in reaction to a just missed forehand, got the worst of it from Tuan Tran and Tuan Le (11-9 in the 5th). Lily Yip, up 2-1 and 5-0 on Le, gave up the 4th to him, but (proving she knows how to start 11-point games) did not relinquish her 7-1 lead in the 5th.

Team Senoda (Todd Sweeris, Brian Pace, Ricky Seemiller, Dave Sakai) had 5-3 trouble with B’s Emerald Boys. Irish lads, were they? No. Suguru Araki, who teaches at Tohoku Fukushi University in Sendai, Japan, recruited Shojiro Iwami, one of the students there, and formed a team with Lim Ming Chui and Avishy Schmidt. Ming, whose wife intensely preferred teaching in Upper New England rather than Lower New Jersey where Ming’s bashed, said, finally, Sayonara; and Ming said, “If the Japanese player wins 3, we beat this team.” And maybe he knew what he was talking about. for, though rated only 2170, he begins by upsetting Pace (2456).

Sakai had his chances against Iwami, but lost in 5. That brought Sweeris up against Schmidt...and down 10-6. But even after Todd had rallied to win that game, it still appeared that Avi was on his way – he won the 2nd, was up 9-7 in the 3rd, and 7-0 in the 4th. So he won after all? Nope – lost in 4. “I’ve no confidence,” he said, shaking his head, but smiling, always smiling, into the face of Fate. Nor was he feeling better when Brian won a key 5-game match against Shojiro. Beatng Sakai helped – that made the tie 3-3. But then came the Senoda mop-up – Sweeris over Iwami, and Pace over Schmidt, again shaking his head and smiling, smiling at what might have been.

The only A team other than the Asian Gang that failed to qualify was the Aucun Stress Canadian team of Marie-Christine Roussy, her brother Jean-Francois, and Anouar Saadi – beaten by Guyana North. Though Marie-Christine’s windshield-wiper grip be damned with faint praise – (Oh, said Danny Seemiller, if I had that girl for a month, even just a week, what I could do with her) – she won her two matches and would, if she got the chance, presumably win a third, but poor Saadi couldn’t take so much as a game.

That left it up to her brother to take two. But, oh, oh, in the match he has to have, up 2-1 against Guyana’s Shawn Emlenton, he gets tangled up, and, tumbling down, painfully jams a barrier leg into his thigh. On losing this game he recovers well enough, finds himself up 10-9 match point in the
5th. Only then, talk about aucun stress, meaning no stress. Jean-Francois badly mishits a ball, then slow-loops into the net, then tightens almost to the point of stopping his stroke. After that, against early '90's Caribbean Champ Sydney Christohe, he's finished – and so... no more stress.

**Round Robin Play**

There are, then, 20 teams theoretically in contention for the Championship. Play is divided into four round robin divisions of 5 A-B-C-D-E teams each – with the 4 seeds heading the 1-A, 1-B, 1-C, 1-D divisions. From each round robin two teams will come out to play Single Elimination in a quarter’s, semi’s, final.

Division 1-A features the top-seeded team, Germany’s Joola TT School Zugbrucke Grenzau. These players represent a unique combination Club/Hotel that, as graphic-design student Wally Green, who recently played in the Japan Open with Barney Reed, tells me, sports the finest, most appointed playing facility in Germany. Playing for this Zugbrucke team are: China’s former World #1 Ma Wenge (now, in mid-Nov., 2003, World #30); Germany’s World #81 Zoltan Fejer-Konnerth, current European Doubles Champ with Timo Boll; and Stefan Feth, semifinalist in the most recent German National’s. Since they were 20-0, they’ll retain their #1 seeding into the quarter’s.

Highlight of their Saturday play to me is not the 5-game match former World Senior Champion Li Yuxiang plays with Fejer-Konnerth, but the one he plays with 1988 Olympic Bronze Medalist Ma Wenge. Next year Li turns 50, and you’d have to look far and wide for a professional his age who has his energy, his desire to please an audience by inviting them into the action with smiles, patter, gestures, and, m’god, movement – playing exhibition jumping jack to straight-man Ma’s lobs. He’s a savvy, scintillating wonder. As Steve Berger said after playing him, “He has the best rhythms. He seems to wait a long time before he hits, then the ball is past you.” An extra nod here to Jerry Wartski for supporting such exhilarating players.

Flipped in with this Zugbrucke team were the USA Men who survived a major 5-4 threat from the Manhattan TT Club #2 team and a lesser 5-3 threat from Team Senoda. Manhattan’s Cameron Scott (2296) lost to both U.S. Olympian Khoa Nguyen (2578) and U.S. Team member Darko Rop (2556) who, prior to this tournament, had taken leave of his Houston Neuro-Muscular Therapy practice and gone to train with the Junior National Team in his Serbian home town, Belgrade.
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Against Darko, Li (2555), also a lefty, won a thrilling 10-8, 8-10, 10-10 swing match. After rallying from down 2-1 and 9-6 in the 4th, Li flashed in two superb counters in the 5th that brought him a 10-9 match point lead—whereupon he served into the net...but still won. Though Scott dropped a 3rd match to De Tran (2454), Li, a quarter century ago the Chinese National Champion, balanced with wins over Khoa and De who also lost to Atanda Musa. Which left Atanda (2573), given the prospect of his 5-man team getting probably at best to the $300 quarter’s, perhaps not enough incentive to rise to the occasion. He lost to both Darko and Khoa. Since Ricky Seemiller had a relatively low 2309 rating. Sakai’s Senoda team depended heavily on Brian Pace and an out-of-practice Todd Sweeris to try to upset the U.S. Men. After Pace could do no more than split key matches—he beat Nguyen but lost to Rop—Todd fell to Khoa. Perhaps then, with a third and final Seemiller loss looming, Brian couldn’t be stout-hearted enough to down De Tran.

In the only other contested tie in the Division— with Pace sitting out, and Sweeris being upset by a stingng John Wetzelr attack—Senoda avoided a poisonous loss with a too-close-for-comfort jump over the Snake Pit. Team-sponsor Sakai and Seemiller’s wins over Rich Burnside made the difference. Maybe, after that long-drawn-out 5th with Ricky, it wasn’t only Li Yuxiang’s serves Rich was lamenting he couldn’t return? Why, you ask, was Pace sitting out? Because he was almost in a stupor after beating Musa and Nguyen, but losing to Chai and Steve Berger (“I haven’t lost to a choppet to the occasion. He lost to both Darko and Khoa."

In Division 1-B, Wartski’s Manhattan TT Club #1 team was made up of Germany’s World #77 Thomas Keinath; Hong Kong’s World #50 Leung Chu Yan; China’s World #48, Chen Zhihui; and the U.S.’s World Women’s #30, Wang Chen, one of the 16 qualifiers for the upcoming World Pro Tour Final. Since they were 20-1, they’ll retain their #2 seeding into quarter’s play. Line to remember: as Wang Chen pens in, scratches out, pens in her order of play preparatory to Manhattan’s near massacre of the New Jersey Elite, Eyal Adini says cheerfully, drooly, “They’re taking this much too seriously.” Oh well, not to harp on the Elite losses, 47-year-old Dickie Fleisher did go 14-12 in the 4th with Leung.

Destined also for the quarter’s, as expected, was the Lip and Rip team of Terry Young, English National Doubles Champion; Ryan Jenkins, habitue of the Welsh Institute of Sport (he upset Keinath in Manhattan #1’s one loss); U.S. former World Team member Razvan Creta; and, joining the Rippers, the celebrated Lip of the team, Randy Cohen.

Leading Division 1-C with a 20-4 record was the New York Athletic Club team of 4-time U.S. Singles Champion David Zhuang. U.S. Team member Barney J. Reed (yes, both do belong to the NYAC), and Lin Zhigang of the prestigious Elan Nevers Club in France. Not a single tie in this Division went more than 5-2—with Barney, feeling jet-lag, dropping matches to top U.S. Juniors Han Xiao and Adam Hugh, and suffering a nasty 18, 9, -6, -5, -7 loss in the Canada #1 tie to Canadian Olympian Peter-Paul Pradeeban. “Pradee’s a completely offensive player,” Sean O’Neill was telling me—“he’s always setting up shots. Also, like David Zhuang, he never gets down on himself.”

David, meanwhile, was being pressed in the 5th by Canada’s ever serious Faazil Kassam, left-handed North American Junior Singles and Doubles Champion. Faazil, down 7-6, 8-7, 9-8, keeps drawing close, then, down double match point, gets in a startling backhand. But again, down 10-9; he can’t close. The match finally over, Zhuang, jubilant, embraces Kassam. Then, strikingly, I’ve never seen it happen before, Faazil resists, and as he continues to resist, David, still in an embrace, literally drugs him half a dozen more steps. New Jersey’s stand-up comedian Alan Fedrick retaliates, so to speak: He comes up to David’s wife Joannie and eyes baby Cassidy. After Joannie quite pleasantly says, “Cassidy’s a Gaelic name, it means clever,” Alan bends over, puts his face into the kid’s, and says, “You’re sick of t.t. already, ain’t you?”

U.S. Junior Han (2501), though downing Reed, suffered a couple of minor upsets—one by New York’s spirited Renata Peluchova who says she enjoys hitting forehands at Coach Liu’s Club and coaching students at her 86th St. Club; and another by Texas Wesleyan University student Courtney Roberts who, up 2-0, almost defeated U.S. Junior Misha Kazantsev as well. Texas Wesleyan got a bad break when 2001 U.S. National Champion Eric Owens, hurrying around in his dorm room, knowing he had to quickly get to the airport, badly stubbed his toe. So, ohhh, when he got off the plane in Baltimore, damn, but he was hurtin’. Sure enough, when he took off his shoe and sock, the sight was not pleasant, and a doctor told him his toe was broken. So there he was, at courtside, dividing his 3.8 GPA attention between Morrison and Boyd’s Organic Chemistry and the drubbing his teammates were getting. Alas, not exactly a collegiate rah-rah scene.

In Division D, there was no Defending Killerspin team—but leading the competition, 20-2, were a Chicago group of Robert Blackwell supporters, 2002 U.S. National Champion Iljja Lupulesku, Sasa Drinic, and Biljanic “Biba” Golic, who were teamed with 29-year-old Bangalore native, now Arizona-based Chetan Baboor (2679), a recent MBA graduate of the Thunderbird International Business School in Glendale just outside Phoenix. Only in this Division did a higher seeded team fail to advance to the quarter’s. Canada #2 (7655) lost to both the U.S. Women (7005) and New York’s Best (7587). Against the Canadian men and a 650-point spread, who’d think our women would have a chance? Lily maybe? Her smash opening, an 11-in-the-5th win over Guo Peng (2522) and follow-up comradely smile to teammates was more Charlie’s Angels-like than quaintly humble women.can’t-compete-with men. Homayoun Kamkar-Parsi, however, though beset by an upper-body strain, was giving no quarter either to Simone Yang or
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ROBO-PONG FEATURES CHART

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known to the table, net, and surrounds... until Tahl who said. "This place stinks." He does not finally I publicly explode. "Sorry," he says, and Ammelz roller to Lily's right shoulder, but it was his opening loss to Banh, but for losing himself Tahl Leibovitz gets our attention, not so much for the quarters. Paralympian Goid Medal winner guys. it remained to be seen who'd advance to the Women having soundly beaten the Guyanese escape try. one began to see the handwriting on the enclosing walls. Just as the U.S. Women had hopes of a needed rout. Indeed, when Fernandez. 2-0, came back to win in 5 and halt Canadian poten-tially hazardous," the Teams' Program had warned). Against the Best ("Brashly named and potentially hazardous," the Teams' Program had warned), Canada #2 still had a chance for a 3-way play-off. Therien engineered a win over the current Philippine Champion, Ernesto Ebuen III, on who, the completion of this tournament would prospects be off to another - in Vietnam. Kamkar-Parsi followed with a backup Canadian victory - over David Fernandez. But then Shao Yu down 2-0, came back to win in 5 and halt Canadian hopes of a needed rout. Indeed, when Fernandez, 12-10 in the 5th, arrested Therien's Canadian escape try, one began to see the handwriting on the enclosing walls. Just as the U.S. Women had beaten the Canadians in the 7th and 8th matches, so too did the Best.

With Canada #2 out of it, and the Best and the Women having soundly beaten the Guaya- nese guys, it remained to be seen who'd advance to the quarter's. Paralympian Gold Medal winner Tahl Leibovitz gets our attention, not so much for his opening loss to Banh, but for losing himself against Yip. Simone had been applying an Ammelz roller to Lily's right shoulder, but it was Tahl who said, "This place stinks." He does not like the way he's playing and makes his objections known to the table, net, and surrounds... until finally I publicly explode. "Sorry," he says, and means it. A sensible fellow, and usually great fun to watch. But though Tawny, Lily, and Simone try to be wonder women - Tawny falls 11-9 in the 4th to Shao, Yang to Fernandez 11-7 in the 5th, and, finally, Lily to Shao 12-10 in the 5th - it's the Best who make the quarter's.

**Quarterfinals**

Against Joola Zugbricke, the Lip was, well, speechless - had put too many of Ma Wen's serves into the net to offer excuses or explanations. But make a little noise for the Rip, please - especially for 25-year-old Ryan Jenkins who's been on the Welsh team since he was 14. Momentarily it was as if Ryan was back winning one of those English Grand Prixes, for, though he lost to Stephan Feth, he gave his team their one moment of glory when he beat Fejer-Konnerth. A nod to Terry Young, too, for going 5 with Fejer-Konnerth and for taking a game from Ma who reportedly was playing with a new racket that had raised a blister on his hand.

New York's Best couldn't win a match or extend one of their New York Athletic Club opponents into the 5th - though both Shao (against Reed) and Ebuen (against Zhuang) went down 11-8 in the 4th. Also, for one I have a chance, wild moment, Paul David was 10-10 in the 1st with Zhuang. Paul, a professional coach who runs a Tuesday-night league at his N.Y. club, is disappointed. He and others feel the $300 prize money for the quarter's isn't at all commensurate with the minimum $440 entry fee they have to pay.

Manhattan #1 blanked the U.S. Men in 4 of the 5 matches - and, in the other, Rop, who, like so many other players before serving, nervously bounces the ball from cupped hand to table maybe half a dozen times, was able to score just the one game from Leung. After his match with Thomas Keinath, De Tran comes off the table replaying some bad serves that he'd made from 9-9 in the 1st and 9-10 in the 3rd. "Well, what were you trying to do?" asks Coach Seemiller. Replies De, "I had no strategy in my head whatsoever."

The one closely contested tie was between Chicago and Canada #1. In the first set of three matches, Baboor over Kassam offsets Csaba (2673 over Drinic (2561). Lupulesku, one of the Killerspin winners from last year, says he's here to warm up for the upcoming U.S. Closed. His opening game win over Peter-Paul on a net augurs well for Chicago. His 6-0 lead in the 2nd does too. At deuce in the 3rd a shutout is possible? No, no shutout. No win in the 4th for Loupy either - he loses that 11-9. A fellow says, "Pradee doesn't have much power." Another says, "Loupy doesn't either." But the first says, "He has it when he needs it. He doesn't use it much." Whatever Loupy has - excellent placements come to mind - it's enough for him to win the 5th.

The second set of three matches adds to Chicago's lead. For though Kassam downs Drinic, Baboor again offsets the loss - outsteadies Peter-Paul, 12-10 in the 4th. Chetan (anybody yet try to "Americanize" him, call him Chet?) may not have had much practice down there in Phoenix since his August Western Open final, but with this tournament giving him a cluster of playing opportunities, his two-wing game was again on the rise. Hence, on losing the first game to Lupulesku, slaps his racket to the table and mutters a few choice not so sotto voce words. These are repeated in the second game when, up 9-6, he loses a good counter-counter point, fails to return serve and is down 10-9. But last April Csaba had been North American runner-up to Johnny Huang, and this summer he'd won that World Junior Circuit tournament in Edmonton, so Loupy...
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can't be too surprised when Bence, rallying up 12-11, cracks in a serve return. The third game is key — and at deuce Bence makes two errors. How the players' shoulders slope when they miss, how discouraged they look. Csaba's not sobbin', but he can't come back. It's 4-2 for Chicago.

In the third set of three matches — will there be three? — we find that against Pradseck, Sasa is up 1-0 and 4-1 in the 2nd. At which point the loudspeaker blares out, "Four Deluxe Ping-Pong Maniacs to the desk, please." "That's bizarre," says a voice from the close-packed audience behind me. Well, there are other Championships to be won — the B and C Division players are playing for $300 too. Since the prize for the semi's is $900, Sasa tries hard to clinch the tie, but from 9-all he makes two pushing errors, and can't challenge again. 4-3 for Chicago.

Against Csaba, Baboor is back mid-point from the table topspinning easily. During the 8-all point in the 1st game, a paper comes floating off the umpire's table. It doesn't look like the ball though. Down 10-9, Chetan mounts an attack off Bence's serve and deuces it. But Csaba thrusts through a backhand to go ad up, then leans in over the table and smacks in a forehand. In the 2nd, Baboor, up 10-7, smoothly loops in the winner. In the 3rd, Chetan, off to a bad 1-5 start, scores only 4 points, repeatedly whiffs the ball — which isn't exactly a confidence builder. In the 4th, Chetan's down 4-0, can't catch up. Csaba comes off court, gets a pat on the back from Canadian Coach Dejan Papić. Tie 4-4.

Loupé, about to play Kassam, warms up with Sasa. The umpire walks over, examines Loupey's racket, then examines Sasa's — it's o.k. too. Proceed. When play gets underway, Kassam's not doing much, while Lupulescu, after snapping in a low, hopping backhand, moves to topspin after forehand and wins the 1st at 7. There's a rousing point early in the 2nd game when Loupey on the run seems to scrape off a piece of barrier-cloth trying to curl the ball in. Hard topspins are exchanged with Faazil making acrobatic scoops from the floor. From 9-all, Loupey twice serves, twice follows for a winner. Then he's off on a run: 4 more points, a Time Out, and 3 more points, making it 7-0 in the 3rd... and Chicago is in the semi's.

**Semifinals**

But not with Lupulescu — he has no stomach for it. Says he has to play from there to "turn" and feels the strain. Enough warm-up for Loupey — let the girl, Biba (2443), play against Manhattan #1. The technical average for the semi's and final is best of 5 matches — with two players playing, if need be, two matches, and one player playing only the 3rd match. Games are now best of 7. The lean, attractive Ms. Golick's opponent is Chen Zhibin from China's Shandong Province who, tall and slender, fit at 41, is capable in finishing one of his long sweeping forehands of flamboyantly spinning not once but twice around on his follow through. He often smiles almost sheepishly — perhaps at participating in this tournament and with this team, for actually he plays with Ma Wenge on the Joola Zugbrücke Grenzau team, runner-up in the European Championships League to perennial Belgian winner Royal Villette Charleroi. Sponsors Chen, a former Chinese National Champion, is of course a gentleman with Biba — scores: 7, 6, 3, and (from 5-1 down) 8.

Next up... and quickly 7-0 down is Drinic against Hong Kong National Team member Leung Chu Yan. I'm sitting with former U.S. player Larry Goldfarb who's been away from the scene for 7 years or so. As we're watching Leung ("Choi!") Or was it ("Chu!") and his 4, 7, 4, 5 win, Larry says, "The arm speed's so fast now I don't know what I remember." (Back too, and playing after a stretch of years, was former U.S. Team member John Onafade. He switched rackets in a match, played a point or two, then was told he couldn't do that unless his first racket was deemed unplayable. John tore the rubber off his first racket, and said, "There, it's unplayable." He was defaulted from the match.)

Baboor at least made an entertaining 6-5, 11, 2, 4, 8, 4 match of it with Thomas Keinath. Watching the German play, I'm impressed by his bird-dog bent to play, his trudge to the ball, to the table, with never a pause regardless of score; and also his all-out wind-ups with seemingly an extra motion as he swings, reminding me of professional golfer Jim Furyk's loop — that is, the loop in his grooved swing.

The other semi's — between Joola Zugbrücke and the N.Y. Athletic Club — is the more combative one. Though it doesn't start out that way. Any even slightly loose ball Reed puts up to Ma is a goner. But though Barney gets only 4 points that 1st game, and is down 9-4 in the 2nd, he rallies, to the crowd's delight, to 10-all. I'm amazed at some of Ma's bullet balls — such low trajectory. and of course when he gets a chance Lin swats it there. He apparently has more chances in the 2nd game, for his 11-7 win ties up the match. In the 3rd from 9-all, Chen scores on a counter, wins 11-9. Then loses the 4th. Up and down this match is going. Which perhaps prompts... not a Boo from an Uncle Sam look-alike and his friends in the audience but a Wave. Call it a stretch. Back come the two leads in this now east of hundreds — and Chen comes in on 10-8 cue to hit an opportune backhand. Lin's forehands are masterful — but they don't get him the win. Manhattan 2- NYAC 0.

One wonders how prepared Thomas Keinath is to play against David Zhuang's Chinese rush-attack. Can he really expect a 40-year-old man to have such quick reactions? Thomas's first two serves David flips in for winners. Next time though, Thomas surprises David with a fast, deceptive serve which, amazingly, David stabs back, and the ball catches the table edge for a 2-point swing. Still, David is down 7-6; but then, with perfect anticipation, he whacks in Thomas's serve. Down 9-8, he whacks in another serve, only this time it's Keinath who's ready — he blocks back would-be winner for an ace. Up 10-8, Thomas gets a net ball that spins back over the net to him. After David wins the 2nd game to tie the match, Keinath starts his mime show — measures a miss with his hands. I can't help but feel that, with that wind-up stroke, he has just that much room for error. But he's a fighter, and he thinks — down 13-12 in the 3rd, with a deft drop return of serve he catches Zhuang unasur. However, a net-lick helps David to a 14-12 win.

In the 4th, with Keinath leading 9-5, it appears that the match will be tied up. But David, with a great serve return, and a fast serve and follow of his own, pulls out the game with a 6-point surge. In the 5th, counterattacking now some of Thomas's hardest hits, David takes the match — and lets out a sonic boom that wakes baby Cassidy. Fittingly, as he prepares to enter the USATT Hall of Fame in Vegas, he's undefeated here.
USA Teams at the Teams, sponsored by Stiga, clockwise from above:

USA Boys
Coach Dan Seemiller, Adam Hugh, Misha Kazantsev, Han Xiao.

USA Men
Khoa Nguyen, Darko Rop, De Tran, Coach Dan Seemiller.

USA Women
Simone Yang, Lily Yip, Coach Hank McCOullum, Tawny Banh.

USA Cadet Boys
Oliver Lei, Coach Mark Nordby, Kevin Phong, Coach Dan Seemiller, Joseph Cochran.

USA Cadet Girls
Barbara Wei, Judy Hugh, Coach Lily Yip, Laura Xiao.

Missing Photo - USA Girls
Whitney Ping, Katherine Wu, Sophia Yi.

Photos by Gerry Chua ©2003
Stiga North American Teams Results

Championships Division - Final: Manhattan d. New York Athletic Club, 3-2
- Leung Chu Yan (MAN) d. Barney J. Reed (NYAC), 9,5,6,6.
- Chen Zhibin (MAN) d. Lin Zhigang (NYAC), 8,10,9,7,8,7.
- David Zhuang (NYAC) d. Thomas Keinath (MAN), -8,7,12,9,7.
- Lin Zhigang (NYAC) d. Leung Chu Yan (MAN), 9,9,-8,6,5,6.
- Chen Zhibin (MAN) d. Barney J. Reed (NYAC), 6,7,3,6.

Semifinal #1: Manhattan d. Chicago, 3-0 (Chen Zhibin d. Bijana Golic, 7,6,3,8; Leung Chu Yan d. Sasa Drinic, 4,7,4,5; Thomas Keinath d. Chetan Baboor, -6,5,11,-9,-8,8,4;)

Quarterfinal #1: Joola Zubrucke d. Lip & Rip, 5-1 (Zoltan Fejer-Konnerth (JZ) d. Terry Young (L&R), 6,6,-5,-3,7; Ma Wenge (JZ) d. Randy Cohen (L&R), 2,8,4; Stefan Feth (JZ) d. Ryan Jenkins (L&R), 5,8,-9,9; Ma Wenge (JZ) d. Terry Young (L&R), 5,10,-9,5; Ryan Jenkins (L&R) d. Zoltan Fejer-Konnerth (JZ), -10,10,6,5; Stefan Feth d. Randy Cohen (L&R), 9,12,6.

Quarterfinal #2: NYAC d. New York's Best, 5-0 (Lin Zhigang d. Paul David, 6,7,7; Barney J. Reed d. Shao Yu, 8,5,-5,8; David Zhuang d. Ernesto Ebuena, 7,-8,5,8; Lin Zhigang d. Shao Yu, 3,1,6; David Zhuang d. Paul David, 10,5,8.

Quarterfinal #3: Manhattan d. USA Men, 5-0 (Leung Chu Yan d. Darko Rop, -9,4,7,7; Chen Zhibin d. Khoa Nguyen, 5,8,10; Thomas Keinath d. De Tran, 9,7,9; Leung Chu Yan d. Khoa Nguyen, 10,9,8; Thomas Keinath d. Darko Rop, 8,6,11.

Quarterfinal #4: Chicago d. Canada, 5-4 (Chetan Baboor (CHI) d. Faazil Kassam (CAN), 9,8,5; Iljia Lupulesku (CHI) d. Pradeeban Peter-Paul (CAN), 9,6,-10,9,6; Bence Csaba (CAN) d. Sasa Drinic (CHI), 5,7,6,3; Chetan Baboor (CHI) d. Pradeeban Peter-Paul (CAN), -8,14,10; Faazil Kassam (CAN) d. Sasa Drinic (CHI), 7,9,10,8; Iljia Lupulesku (CHI) d. Bence Csaba (CAN), 8,-11,10,7; Pradeeban Peter-Paul (CAN) d. Sasa Drinic (CHI), -8,9,9,7; Bence Csaba (CAN) d. Chetan Baboor (CHI), 10,-7,4,8; Iljia Lupulesku (CHI) d. Faazil Kassam (CAN), 7,9,2.

Division 1: New York Athletic Club, 5-0 (David Zhuang d. Thomas Keinath, 10,5,8,7; Chen Zhibin d. Leung Chu Yan, 9,9,8,7; Thomas Keinath d. David Zhuang, 5,10,9,6; Leung Chu Yan d. Chen Zhibin, 9,-9,9,7; Thomas Keinath d. Chen Zhibin, 9,8,10,5,6,9.

Division 2: Asian Gang (Steve Nguyen, Tuan DAI Le, Tuan Anh Tran, Marta Massouda)

Division 3: A.A. Superb-Chicago (Petra Sestakova, Philip Tam, Valeryi Ort, Henry Mak)

Division 4: Minnesota (Sandeep Mahat, Joseph Podvin, Andrew Knips, Nathaniel Curran)

Division 5: G.T. Top Chattas (Usama Nausrudeen, Odingo Mitchell, Shaun Abrams, Jalma Abrams, Colin Ford)

Division 6: Old Reliabes (Donald Garlanger, Eric Eisley, Robert Saperstein, Stephen Good, Svetlana Panich)

Division 7: Fighting Irish Volunteers (Soon Chian Lim, Mark Nordby, Gordon Cochran, Shelby Lane)

Division 8: The Ruffians (Kevin Duesbury, Liden Thomas, Tommy Guy Castronovo, Edric Lewis, Carlton Sutton)

Division 9: Fighting Blades (Gary Gadzienko, David Zhou, Rondell Jordan, Evan Mommio)

Division 10: Howard University (Andrew Belfinatti-Knight, Ayomikun Adeloyo, David Terrelonge, Kevin Rembridge, Kurt Bembridge)

Division 11: N.P. Veterans (Donald Duff, Michael Vieira, Paul Boodhoo, Akbar Ali)

Division 12: The Collective (Khaled Khalafallah, Richard Shrow, Richard James, Donald Franklin)
14th Huntsman World Senior Games
St. George, Utah • Oct. 6-10, 2003 • By Grant Misbach

Two years ago, in 1991, we started out with 6 tables crowded in a small church gym. Over the years we have steadily improved, growing, changing venues, and adding tables. We are now playing in the Dixie Convention Center (an excellent venue) and have 16 tables. This year we were able to start all events out as round robins leading into single elimination. We had approximately 145 players from the United States and six foreign countries. We experimented with a random draw doubles (that replaced mixed doubles), which was well received. But many still wanted to have the mixed doubles event. So next year we will bring back the mixed doubles and give players the option of playing in mixed doubles or the random draw doubles, but not both.

Competition is open to all those age 50 and over. Dora Morrison from Portland, Oregon at age 91 was our oldest player to participate this year. Her ability and stamina were amazing for her age. We have good participation by our women players who make up about one-third of the players. We are always looking for and encouraging more of them to participate. The table tennis competition is held in conjunction with about 20 other sports. Many other fine activities are held along with these games. It is a great place to combine the tournament with a vacation to see the many things in St. George, Utah and the surrounding areas.

**Men’s Singles**

50-54 Gold: David Edwards (Rancho Cucamonga, CA); Silver: Roger Kuskei (Longmont, CO); Bronze: Lon Dean (Seal Beach, CA).

55-59 Gold: Karl-Josef Assenmacher (Luhrth, Ger); Silver: Randy Kiser (Hutchinson, KS); Bronze: James Morris (Cumming, GA).

64-66 Gold: Karsten Wendt (Norderstedt, Ger); Silver: Wilfred Escobar (Sun City, CA); Bronze: Mark Alderman (San Diego, CA).

69-69 Gold: Ragnar Fahlstrom (La Mesa, CA); Silver: Allen McDermott (Monument, CO); Bronze: Barry Neisel (Malaga, Spain).

74-74 Gold: Lynnwood Smith (Palm Springs, FL); Silver: Dick Peregrine (Port Washington, WI); Bronze: Norman Silver (Colorado Springs, CO).

79-79 Gold: Ernst Junker (Iserlohn, Ger); Silver: Clifford Metzger (Salina, KS); Bronze: Cornelius Smyth (Chula Vista, CA).

84-84 Gold: Herb Epstein (Finnt, TX); Silver: James Lawrence (Blexley, OH); Bronze: Leonard Spavin (Scunthorpe, Eng).

89-89 Gold: Ivan Slade (San Marcos, CA).

**Women’s Singles**

50-54 Gold: Huiping Fuschino (Chandler, AZ); Silver: Lidija Kalnina (Riga, Latvia); Bronze: Brabara Bitgood (Laurel, MD).

55-59 Gold: Miyoko Higashiyama (Osaka, Japan); Silver: Susan Salzgeber (Seminole, FL); Bronze: Ann McNeil (Newark, DE).

64-66 Gold: Pui Har Chanso (Monterey Park, CA); Silver: Ingrid Bielfeldt (Hamburg, Ger); Bronze: Irina Borisova (Oakland, CA).

**Men’s Doubles**

50-54 Gold: David Edwards (Rancho Cucamonga, CA); Silver: Lynnwood Smith (Palm Springs, FL); Bronze: Stanley Zhang (Juneau, AK)/Robert Janes (Juneau, AK).

55-59 Gold: Karl Josef Assenmacher (Luhrth, Ger)/Karsten Wendt (Norderstedt, Ger); Silver: James Morris (Cumming, GA)/Gerald Echols (Cumming, GA); Bronze: Randy Kiser (Hutchinson, KS)/Wilfredo Escobar (Sun City, CA).

64-66 Gold: Mark Adelman (San Diego, CA)/Ragnar Fahlstrom (La Mesa, CA); Silver: C. Bud Henthorn (Cincinnati, OH)/Sid Stansel (Kettering, OH); Bronze: Hsiao-Shih Hsu (Woodside, NY)/Sherman Hsieh (New York City, NY).

69-69 Gold: Barry Meisel (Malaga, Spain)/Bill Noely (Knoxville, TN); Silver: Ernst Junker (Iserlohn, Ger)/Viktor Troppman (Las Vegas, NV); Bronze: Allen McDermott (Monument, CO)/Ray Pestridge (Stillwater, OK).

74-74 Gold: Dick Peregrine (Port Washington, WI)/Ivan Slade (San Marcos, CA); Silver: Robert Poteet (Carmarillo, CA)/Fred Cericolora (Albuquerque, AZ); Bronze: Augi Kuhn (Pentiction, BC)/Harold Fredrickson (Richland, WA).

75+ Gold: Byang Forsberg (Lodi, CA)/Cornelius Smyth (Chula Vista, CA); Silver: Bob Hummel (Sandy, UT)/Glen Bleak (Salt Lake City, UT).

**Women’s Doubles**

59-59 Gold: Lidija Kalnina (Riga, Latvia)/Irina Borisova (Oakland, CA); Silver: Ingrid Bielfeldt (Hamburg, Ger)/Miyoko Higashiyama (Osaka, Japan); Bronze: Huipino Fuschino (Chandler, AZ)/Donna Lu (Sun City West, AZ).

69-69 Gold: Harriet Quon (Garden Grove, CA)/Pui Har Chanso (Monterey Park, CA); Silver: Joanne Gipple (Denver, CO)/Ariene Pfeil (Thousand Oaks, CA); Bronze: Sari Kisbany (Redington Shores, FL)/Nahe Williams (Redington Shores, FL).
2003 WORLD CADET CHALLENGE — USA RESULTS

Genting, Malaysia · Oct. 28-30, 2003 · Uniforms sponsored by Killerspin

The North American Team

**Coaches**
Lily Yip (USA), Attila Csaba (CAN)

**Cadet Boys’ Team**
Adam Hugh (USA), Misha Kazantsev (USA), Peter Chiu (CAN), Aldrich Leung (CAN)

**Cadet Girls’ Team**
Judy Hugh (USA), Lani Lei (USA), Shirley Yan (CAN), Fanni Csaba (CAN)

USA Singles & Doubles

**Cadet Boys’ Singles**
• 11th Adam Hugh
• 16th Misha Kazantsev

**Cadet Boys’ Doubles**
• 9th Adam Hugh/Misha Kazantsev
• 11th Judy Hugh

**Cadet Girls’ Singles**
• 12th Lani Lei

**Cadet Girls’ Doubles**
• 4th Judy Hugh/Lani Lei

Complete North American Team Results

North American Boys’ Team (A combined USA/Canada Team)
The North American Boys’ Team started out in a preliminary RR group of four teams: Latin America, China and Africa.

**North American Girls’ Team** (A combined USA/Canada Team)
The Girls’ team started out in a preliminary RR group of four teams: Malaysia, Europe and Latin America.

**Under 800 and Beginner: Gold**
- 1. China
- 2. Europe
- 3. Asia
- 4. North America
- 5. Oceania
- 6. Latin America
- 7. Africa
- 8. Malaysia

**North American Girls’ Team**
- 1. China
- 2. Europe
- 3. Asia
- 4. North America
- 5. Oceania
- 6. Latin America
- 7. Africa
- 8. Malaysia

**Cadet Boys’ Singles**
- Filip Bajramovic (USA), 7.8.6, 9.5, 7.10

**Cadet Girls’ Doubles**
- 4th Misha Kazantsev/Lani Lei

**Complete North American Team Results**

North American Boys’ Team (A combined USA/Canada Team)
The North American Boys’ Team started out in a preliminary RR group of four teams: Latin America, China and Africa.

**North American Girls’ Team** (A combined USA/Canada Team)
The Girls’ team started out in a preliminary RR group of four teams: Malaysia, Europe and Latin America.

**Under 800 and Beginner: Gold**
- 1. China
- 2. Europe
- 3. Asia
- 4. North America
- 5. Oceania
- 6. Latin America
- 7. Africa
- 8. Malaysia

**1st-4th Playoffs**
- Europe d. North America, 3-0
- Asia d. North America, 3-2
- Europe d. North America, 3-0
- Asia d. North America, 3-2

**5th-8th Playoffs**
- North America d. Africa, 3-0
- North America d. Malaysia, 3-0
- North America d. Africa, 3-0
- North America d. Malaysia, 3-0

**Final Standings**
- 1. China
- 2. Europe
- 3. Asia
ARIZONA OPEN
Phoenix, AZ - Oct. 12, 2003

Arizona Open Champion Soskic Vukman and Runner-up Mitsutoshi Nakada.

Championship: 1st Soskic Vukman 2nd Mitsutoshi Nakada.
Class A: 1st Robert Bryant, Jr.; 2nd Ping Faschino.
Class B: 1st Keith Chan; 2nd Chris Portillo.
Class C: 1st Jay Turlberville; 2nd Pramod Imnianeni.
Class D: 1st Paul Hamra; 2nd Ron Score.
Class E: 1st William Wong; 2nd Fred Cericola.
Class F: 1st Paul Hamra; 2nd Ron Score.

MDTTC OCTOBER OPEN
Gaithersburg, MD - Oct. 11-12, 2003

Open - Final: Samson Dubina d. James Duan, 7-9, 9-6, 11-9; SF: Dubina d. Lixin Lang, 6-8, 8-2, 10-8; Duan d. Larry Hodges, 1-5, 11-9, 10-11; QF: Lang d. Joseph Stewart, 5-9, 9-5, 10-9.

MARYLAND CIRCUIT
Eldersburg, MD - Dec. 6-7, 2003

Open: 1st Julian Waters; 2nd Edwin Baguma.
Over 40: 1st Steve Hochman; 2nd Julian Waters.
U1200: 1st Julian Waters 2nd Edwin Baguma.
U1900: 1st Shih Lin 2nd Dave Kowalewski.
U1700: 1st Dave Kowalewski 2nd Rob Carmack.
U1500: 1st David Steinbach 2nd Warren Evans.
U1300: 1st Mark Cohen 2nd Dave Jarrin.
U3600 Doubles: 1st Julian Waters/Warren Wetzler; 2nd Dave Kowalewski/Terry Berman.
U2800 Doubles: 1st Bill VanWright/Warren Wetzler; 2nd Dave Jarrin/Gary McCone.

BERNARD HOCK OPEN
New Albany, IN - Oct. 11-12, 2003

Open: 1st John Allen; 2nd Mark Artman.
Open Doubles: 1st Allen/Arjunne; 2nd Hicks/Arman.
U2200: 1st Mark Artman; 2nd Arjun.
U2000: 1st Keith Brewster; 2nd Lu Jin.
U1800: 1st Tadao Inui; 2nd Mike Bowles.
U1600: 1st Larry Staggser; 2nd Mikhail Gusov.
U1400: 1st RoseMary Raddish; 2nd Bill Capshaw.
U1200: 1st Alica Burnett; 2nd RoseMary Raddish.
U1000: 1st Mark Ebert; 2nd Esther Gusov.
Over 40: 1st John Alen; 2nd Larry Hawkins.
Under 18: 1st Arthur Kheyfets; 2nd Alliea Burnett.
Eugene Bricker Challenge: No one 90+ to challenge.
3200 Doubles: Zhang/Wu
Hardbat: 1st Alex Kephats.
Teams: Class A: 1st Artman/Snider; Class B: 1st Barone/Pease; Class C: 1st Taylor/Owens.
NEW JERSEY OPEN
Westfield, NJ • Oct. 4–5, 2003
Open – Final: Paul David d. Adam Hugh, 4,10,9,8; SF: David d. De Tran, 1,6,-11,2,-9,8; Hugh d. Ernesto Ebuen, 7,7,-8,9,7.
U2450 – Final: Brian Dattel & Paul David Split; SF: Dattel & Cameron Scott, 5,9,4,9,9,9; David & David Rosenzweig, 9,7,6,5.
U1000 – Final: Patrick Mualem & Chad DeWitt, 5,10,15,8,5; SF: Mualem & Ken Larson, 4,6,4,11,9; DeWitt & Wes Judge, 8,9,8,9,9.
U800 – Final: Antawn Davis d. Junsung Chang, 11,9,6,8,7,9; SF: Davis d. Dwayne Griffith, 8,7,9,8,4,9; Davis & Thai Tran, 5,6,6,4,9,7.

U1200 – Final: Victor Kali d. Andy Hall/Brandon Loy, 8,9,9,8,5; SF: Victor d. Ted Blass/Cherlkova, 6,9,9,8,4; Polinsky d. Siddarth Shankaren, 6,8,9,9,11.
Under 14 – Final: Shreeniwas Dhong d. Thomas An, 9,7,8,9,8,7; SF: Dhong d. Da Tang/Thomas An, 5,6,9,8,7,9; Dhong & Da Tang, 9,7,8,9,8,7.
Under 16 – Final: Da Tang d. Thomas An, 7,9,9,8,9,7; SF: Tang d. Gregory Turner, 8,6,7,9,8,9; Tang & Xiang Gao, 8,6,7,9,8,9.

Open Doubles: 1st Gregg Rochertshaw/Phil Moy; 2nd Ming Xu.
Division A: 1st A.J. Carney; 2nd Ming Xu; 3rd Albert Lai; 4th Xianzhong Chen.
Division B: 1st Said Daoud; 2nd Sri Ramaswamy.
Division C: 1st Joe Huizat; 2nd Anil Sharma.
Division D: 1st Jonathan Lee; 2nd Kevind McBeth.
Division E: 1st Alan Badger; 2nd Sam Mehta.

STIGA CARY FALL OPEN
Cary, NC • Sept. 12-13, 2003
Class A: 1st Gregg Robertsaw/2nd Hiep Tran; 3rd Thoornsten Eche; 4th Jim McQueen.
Class B: 1st Barry Ratner; 2nd Billy Marshall.
Class C: 1st Ray Filz; 2nd Jerry Golubow.
Class D: 1st Dan Barrett; 2nd Sam Faminibia.
Open Doubles: 1st Gregg Robertsaw/Jim McQueen; 2nd Brenda Mun/Min Hsu.
U4000 Doubles: 1st Min Hsu/Qing Gao; 2nd Rick Mundy/Hiep Tran.
U3000 Doubles: 1st R. Unanue/S. Unanue; 2nd Andy Hall/Brandon Loy.
Open Hardbat: 1st Victor Kan; 2nd Gregg Robertsaw.
U2000 Hardbat: 1st Victor Kan; 2nd Min Hsu.

ARKANSAS OPEN
Little Rock, AR • Oct. 4, 2003
Open Singles: 1st Biljana Golic; 2nd Tai Long Tey.
Open Doubles: 1st Biljana Golic/Michael Amren; 2nd Tai Long Tey./Soon Chian Lim.
Women: 1st Renee Reves; 2nd Claudia Bullock.
Class A: 1st Narasingim Ramakrishnan; 2nd Dennis Fritchie.
Class B: 1st Ben Phillips; 2nd Clem Volpert.
Class C: 1st John Falco; 2nd Gus Richards.
Class D: 1st Cliff Li; 2nd Keith Bates.
U2100: 1st Don Jackson; 2nd Shelby Lane.
U1900: 1st Tom Kloth; 2nd Glen Davis.
U1700: 1st Bob Kyker; 2nd Brad Williams.
U1500: 1st Dwayne Grifith; 2nd Allen Thomas.
U1300: 1st Ben Phillips; 2nd Paul Liu.
U1100: 1st Matt McConnell; 2nd James Liu.
U900: 1st Joyce Hartmann; 2nd Don Ding.
40-50: 1st Bill Ryan; 2nd Paul Hadfield.
Over 60: 1st Tom Kloth; 2nd Bob Kyker.
Under 18 Boys: 1st Shelby Lane; 2nd Thuy Bui.
Hardbat: 1st Denis Fritchie; 2nd Charlie Brooks.

USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE • January/February 2004
MALAYSIAN ITTF PRO TOUR
Johor Bahru, Malaysia - Oct. 2-5, 2003
Men's Singles - Final: Liu Guozheng (CHN) d. Ma Lin (CHN), 8-7, 9-7, 9-5, 9-7; SF: Wang Liqin d. Chen Qi (CHN), 10-8, 5-11, 11-8, 11-9; QF: Chen Qi d. Chen Sheng (CHN), 11-8, 11-9, 11-3.

Men's Doubles - Final: Cao Zhen/Chen Jining (CHN) d. Ma Lin/Shi Jiheng (CHN), 11-6, 4-11, 11-7, 11-9, 11-8; SF: Cao Zhen/Chen Jining d. Ma Lin/Shi Jiheng, 11-5, 11-7, 11-9, 11-5.


GERMAN ITTF PRO TOUR
Bremen, GER - Nov. 6-9, 2003

Men's Doubles - Final: Ma Lin/Wang Hao (CHN) d. Chen Wei/Kang Ji (KOR), 11-8, 11-6, 11-9; SF: Ma Lin/Wang Hao d. Chen Wei/Kang Ji, 11-6, 11-8, 11-9.


1ST EGYPT INTERNATIONAL VETERANS CHAMPIONSHIPS
Sham El-Sheikh City, Egypt - Oct. 19-25, 2003 - By Dr. Azmy Ibrahim
Do you want to see the water of the sea as dark as navy blue?
Do you want to see coral reefs with as many colors as you have ever seen before?
Do you want to spend your night in a dark as navy blue?
Do you want to have the sea shining every day with warm summer rays?
Do you want to see seagulls who are not to save the lives of the swimmers but to guard the life of the corals and the fish?
Do you want to bath day by day in the sunshine and swim at night in the moonlight?
Do you want to sleep in the street in a coffee shop, which extends into the middle of the street with no cars to disturb you?

Do you want to see streets and malls designed in a modern way like Via Penito in Rome and those pictured in Paris?

It was all there, in addition to a tiered extended hotel, Domina Coral Bay, with 1400 units, with swimming pools and a choice to have a dip in the blue calm smooth water. You have to travel around the premises in open-air shuttle busses. The open buffet was serving all kinds of food, from eastern to western styles of meat, fish, bakery and all sorts of salads and variety of desserts. Every night there was a night show and a variety of entertainment.

The open ceremony of the tournament was around a swimming pool. The show was on the land and the water at the same time. A special construction of Abu Simbel, an Ancient Egyptian temple, accompanied with scenes, dancers, music, and songs from the ancient images of the Pharaohs. Sun boats were floating in the pool with Egyptian queens sitting in glory of customs and ornaments. Fire players were performing and guarding them on the ground.

And a closing ceremony was held in an open theatre with different scenes of Egyptian background. All awards and recognitions for government officials, sponsors, players, officials, and volunteers were presented at this ceremony. Between each presentation there was a show, which took us from one corner of the world to the other. Brazilian dances were performed on Bahia music, and the Can Can dancers gave the Moulin Rouge show of Paris. It was an unforgettable experience. Both the
Americans Wayne Lo and Tahl Leibovitz qualified for the 2004 Paralympic Games by winning Class 8 and Class 9 at the 2nd Para Pan American Games in Brasilia, Brazil. Lo and Leibovitz also teamed up to take top honors along with teammates Bob Bowlander and Mark Keeter in the Class 8-10 Team event over Mexico and Brazil. In the standing division of Open play, Leibovitz won his third gold medal while Lo took the bronze.

**Team USA**

**Coaches:** Peizhen Shao, Jackie O'Neill

**Team Leader:** Laura Ryan

**Team Trainer:** Gina Maggio

**Men's Team:** Norm Bass, Bob Bowlander, Chuck Focht, Mark Keeter, Tony Lara, Tahl Leibovitz, Edward Levy, Wayne Lo, Raul Pernites, Chris Puls, Andre Scott

**Women's Team:** Carolyne Bethka, Jackie Diddeno, Jennifer Johnson, Terry Tierney

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**Results**

**(DNP = USA players who Did Not Place)**

**Men's Wheelchair Open**
1. Mario Pazaran - MEX
2. Luiz Silva - BRA
3. Vitaliano Brandoli - ARG

**DNP:** Andre Scott, Chuck Focht, Tony Lara, Raul Pernites

**Men's Standing Open**
1. Tahl Leibovitz - USA
2. José Vivanco - MEX
3. Waym Lo - USA

**DNP:** Bob Bowlander, Nnor Bass, Edward Levy, Chris Puls, Mark Keeter

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**USA Medalists**

**Teams Results**

**Class 3 Men's**
1. Luiz Algacir da Silva - BRA
2. Giovanni Rodriguez - CRC
3. Jesus Sanches - MEX

**DNP:** Tony Lara

**Class 5 Men's**
1. Mario Pazaran - MEX
2. Robert Alvez - BRA
3. Daniel Rodriguez - ARG

**DNP:** Andre Scott - USA

**DNP:** Chuck Focht

**Class 6 Men's**
1. Carlo Michell - BRA
2. Victor Solis - CHI
3. Washington Galaz - CHI

**DNP:** Mark Keeter

**Class 7 Men's**
1. Christovan Lima - BRA
2. Norman Bass Jr. - USA
3. Cristian Dettioni - CHI

**DNP:** Edward Levy - USA

**DNP:** Chris Puls

**Class 8 Men's**
1. Wayne Lo - USA
2. Robert Bowlander - USA
3. Antonio Fernandez - BRA

**Class 9 Men's**
1. Tahl Leibovitz - USA
2. Edmison Pinheiro - BRA
3. Martin Pelletier - CAN
4. John Macpherson - CAN

**USA Medalists Team Results**

**Men's Class 8-10**
1. USA (gold) - Leibovitz, Lo, Bowlander, Keeter
2. Mexico (silver)
3. Brazil (bronze)

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**Class 6-7**
1. Brazil (gold)
2. USA (silver) - Bass, Levy, Puls
3. Chile (bronze)
Table Tennis Technique with Valdimir Samsonov
Top world-ranked player Vladimir Samsonov demonstrates table tennis techniques, narrated throughout with excellent studio fast- and slow-mo demonstrations of all basic and advanced techniques of table tennis, with outstanding bonus video segments from international competitions. Professional quality. 70 minutes.
Set of 3 DVDs $129.95 or $49.95 each for A, B, or C
-- 600 action-packed minutes! !!!
Item: VMTS

Table Tennis Fascination II
Collector's Edition. This is a really beautiful book with outstanding colorful photos printed on high-quality glossy paper. Complete with photo descriptions. 177 pages full color.

47th World Championships DVD
2003 World Championships DVDs 47th World in Paris, France. See the exciting matches from the 2nd round through the finals. 600 action-packed minutes!!!
Set of 3 DVDs $129.95 or $49.95 each for A, B, or C
Item: VMT603

Ratings Questions?
You can now search for all your results online at www.usatt.org. Should you have any ratings-related questions, contact Felisa Huggins, USATT Headquarters, One Olympic Plaza, Colorado Springs, CO 80909. To find your rating if you cannot access our website, send a self-addressed, stamped postcard with your name and the date of your last tournament. You may also contact us at 719-866-4583 or by e-mail at ratings@usatt.org.
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<th>City</th>
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*Note: The table continues with rankings for various states and cities.*
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<td>Shanxi</td>
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*Note: This table presents the top 10 players in the 2023 World Table Tennis Championships.*
January 3 - Ben Hill/Stiga Open, Atlanta, GA. Contact: Coach Ralph Presley, 404-344-4728. Rampresley@aol.com. ★★★

January 10 - Mini-MD Medallion Championship, Cumberland, MD. Contact: C. James Williams, 301-689-9941. 0 Star


January 24 - 2004 Florida Open Sunburst Tour #1, Clearwater, FL. Contact: Keith Hanley, 727-656-0118. Gouger39@aol.com. ★

January 24 - Maryland Giant RR, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne M. Kronlage, 410-489-7291. 0 Star

January 24-25 - Framingham TTC January Open, Framingham, MA. Contact: Sanjay Dixit, 508-561-1464. 0 Star

January 31 - Mississippi Gulf Coast Open, Ocean Springs, MS. Contact: Albert R. Weaver, 228-875-3349. 0 Star

January 31-February 1 - 2004 MDTTC Winter Open, Gaithersburg, MD. Contact: Wei Xiao, 301-916-4862. Weixia042@hotmail.com. ★

January 31-February 1 - Orlando Winter Open, Orlando, FL. Contact: Olga Soltesz, 407-830-4009. ★★

February 7 - Arkansas Closed, Little Rock, AR. Contact: Eugene Atha, 501-835-5291. 0 Star

February 7-8 - Maryland Circuit, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne Kronlage, 410-489-7291. 0 Star

February 8 - New England Winter Classic, Waltham, MA. Contact: Mozart Francois, 978-466-3486. Club@walthamttc.com. ★★★

February 14-15 - Arizona Open, Phoenix, AZ. Contact: Wayne Johnson, 480-239-4384. Wjohn@dancris.com. 0 Star

February 21 - Maryland Giant RR, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne Kronlage, 410-489-7291. 0 Star

February 28-29 - California Open on the 2004 Stiga N.A. Tour, Fremont, CA. Contact: North American Table Tennis, 301-738-8250. Info@natabletennis.com. ★★★★★

February 28-29 - 2004 Spin Open, Atlanta, GA. Contact: Michael Laltav, 516-359-3617. Info@espitech.com. ★★★

February 27-29 - Rochester NY Giant RR, Rochester, NY. Contact: Jeff Koch, 585-964-7243. Mrjkoch@aol.com. ★

March 6-7 - Maryland Circuit, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne Kronlage, 410-489-7291. 0 Star

March 13 - Atlanta Giant Round Robin, Atlanta, GA. Contact: Wendell Dillon, 770-923-5110. Pong35@mindspring.com. ★


March 13-14 - Harlingen Spring Open RR, Harlingen, TX. Contact: Robert Salmeron, 956-423-1752. Rsalmern@ix.netcom.com. 0 Star

March 20 - Maryland Giant RR, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne Kronlage, 410-489-7291. 0 Star

March 19-21 - Stiga 'Cary Cup' Open, Cary, NC. Contact: Mike Babuin, 919-465-9831. Mike.babuin@townofcary.org. ★★★★★


April 3-4 - Maryland Circuit, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne Kronlage, 410-489-7291. 0 Star

April 4 - 2004 Mikreec giant RR, Erie, PA. Contact: Sam Steiner, 814-833-8704. Samsteiner@compserv.com.★★

April 10 - Atlanta Spring Open, Atlanta, GA. Contact: Warren Moon, 404-284-6030. Wamoon@mindspring.com. ★

April 10-11 - 2004 MDTTC Spring Open, Gaithersburg, MD. Contact: Wei Xiao, 301-916-4862. Weixia042@hotmail.com. ★

April 17 - Maryland State Closed, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne Kronlage, 410-489-7291. 0 Star

April 25 - Arizona Closed, Phoenix, AZ. Contact: Wayne Johnson, 480-755-9976. Wjohn@dancris.com. 0 Star

April 10 - 2004 Stiga NA Tour., Newark, DE. Contact: North American Table Tennis, 301-738-8250. Info@natabletennis.com. ★★★★★

June 5-6 - 2004 MDTTC June Open, Gaithersburg, MD. Contact: Wei Xiao, 301-916-4862. Weixia042@hotmail.com. ★

June 12-13 - Best of the West Open, Phoenix, AZ. Contact: Wayne Johnson, 480-755-9976. Wjohn@dancris.com. 0 Star

June 12-13 - Maryland Circuit, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne Kronlage, 410-489-7291. 0 Star

June 12-13 - Stiga Open on the 2004 Stiga NA Tour., Newark, DE. Contact: North American Table Tennis, 301-738-8250. Info@natabletennis.com. ★★★★★

June 26 - Maryland Giant RR, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne Kronlage, 410-489-7291. 0 Star


July 10-11 - Maryland Circuit, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne Kronlage, 410-489-7291. 0 Star

July 24 - Maryland Giant RR, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne Kronlage, 410-489-7291. 0 Star

July 24-25 - Eastern Open on the 2004 Stiga N.A. Tour, Piscataway, NJ. Contact: North American Table Tennis, 301-738-8250. Info@natabletennis.com. ★★★★★
Before putting together the San Diego Giant RR and Team Tournament, I asked myself, “What do table tennis players want?” The answer is simple: table tennis players want to play table tennis, not sit around and wait. I decided that this simple fact would be the principle by which I would run my first tournament. After some reflection, I decided that the giant RR format would be the best way to guarantee players lots of matches against evenly matched opponents, and so all four events – Over 1700s, Under 1700s, Seniors, and Teams – followed this format.

Another good reason to use the giant RR format was that there are no giant RR tournaments in California, even though it’s very popular in other parts of the country. Therefore, I thought this would be a great opportunity to introduce the format to the West Coast. Many players that came to the tournament were initially skeptical of the tournament format, but after playing lots and lots of table tennis (and initially skeptical of the tournament format, but after playing lots and lots of table tennis (and thus having fun), they all went away believers. (For those unfamiliar with the giant RR format, it’s quite simple. Just seed the players into divisions; put all players in the same division into one RR, and let them play it out!)

Before plunging into the details of the tournament, I’d like to take the time to thank the tournament sponsors – Butterfly, the SDTTA, Nick’s table tennis Supplies, and Thai Café. Thank you all for your support. Now, the tournament!

**Over 1700**

The Over 1700s had six divisions with seven players per division, so each player in the event played six best of seven matches – quite a marathon! The top division featured Ernesto Ebuen (rated 2454, and visiting from the Philippines), Tuan Le (2305), Davey Umel Jr. (2258), Tri Dinh (2247), Thomas Plaisted (2222), David Sakai (2209), and Scott Endicott (2207). Although Ebuen would be the clear favorite, just looking at how close the ratings were between the other players one could tell that there would be some intense competition in this group. The matches played out to form, as Ebuen ran the table to finish first. Dr. Tuan Le’s only loss came to Ebuen, and so he finished second. The battle for third was expected to be tight, as the third, fourth and fifth seeds (Umel Jr., Dinh, and Plaisted) are all members of the San Diego TT association and thus know each other very well. As expected, they battled it out and ended up in a three-way tie. In the end, Umel had the best games won/lost ratio, and took third. Tri finished fourth and Thomas fifth, just as they were seeded.

One of the most entertaining and intense matches was between Davey Umel Jr. and David Sakai. Anyone who has seen Mr. Sakai play knows that he has a way of making the points last forreeeeeever, eliciting many oohs and aaahs from the crowd. Umel has an overwhelming forehand but also has great defense, so the crowd was in for a plethora of long rallies and great saves. As the points got longer and longer and more and more spectacular, the crowd grew larger and larger.

Umel had jumped out to a 2-0 lead, but Sakai came back to tie it 2-2. It seemed that the tide had turned in favor of David Sakai, as he was moving Umel around, keeping the ball on the table, staying in the point until either he could put it away or until Umel missed – classic Sakai. However there are two things about Umel that I always liked. One, he’s not afraid to lose. Two, he plays with unbridled passion. So at some point, he decided that he was going to win or lose this match on his own terms, and started unleashing crushing forehand smashes that were simply amazing and unreturnable. In the end, Umel pulled it out 4-2, and was on his way to third place.

**Under 1700**

In Division two of the Over 1700s, Konstantin Chemnonskiiy (2183) and Rudy Miranda (2202) both went 5-1, but Konstantin held the head-to-head tiebreaker and thus won first place. Michel Amren (2207, Texas Wesleyan University) went 3-3 and took third, again with the help of the head-to-head tiebreaker over Wade Sun (2182).

Tiebreakers would feature prominently in this tournament, due to the fact that in many divisions the rating difference between the top seed and the bottom seed was often less than 100 points. Case in point would be Division three of the Over 1700s. Here, Khanh Duong (2107), Vuksan Soskic (2052), and Grantley Charles (2062) would all go 5-1, and end up in a three way tie for first. In the end, the final standing was Khanh Duong first, Vuksan Soskic second, and Grantley Charles third.

Other notables from the Over 1700s … Ouwen Zhang won 4-1 over Gene Chiu to take the battle of the 1773 rated players. And Ricardo Gonzalez took first in Division six, even though it was his first tournament in over a year.

**Under 1700**

In this event, there were nine players per division, and matches were best of five. Gerry Chua won Division One of this event. Gerry is known for the numerous photographs that he has contributed to USATT Magazine, and it would be fun if he could finally get a picture of himself published. (That’s a hint, Larry.)
SCENES FROM THE SAN DIEGO OPEN

Photos by Sungill Kim ©2003
Dang (1488), Edward Luong (1423), and Ryan Boeche all went 8-0 to win Divisions two, three and four, respectively.

**Seniors**

The Senior event followed the giant RR format, but with best of five matches instead of best of seven. This was in deference to, well, the seniors. In the end, Ralph Guilory went undefeated to take first, and Allen Silberman took second with only one loss.

**Teams**

The two-player team event could be described by three words - fun, fun, and fun (Scott Malek of Powerpong positively looked like a kid in a candy store the whole day). The format was the Davis Cup format (two singles, doubles, and then two more singles), with a limit of two players per team (Some tournaments allow up to four players). Being able to play both doubles and singles, and always having a teammate around to coach their matches really made for a great tournament experience for all players.

Matches between teams were organized using the giant RR format, with six teams per division. In other words, the top six rated teams go into division one, the next six go into division two, etc. (the team’s rating is the sum of the two players’ ratings). All six teams in a division played each other, so each player got to play 5-10 singles matches and 5 doubles matches. Let’s just say that I believe table tennis players should be in shape.

The maximum team rating allowed was 4400, and the top team in Division One “Saigon Boys” (Tuan Le & Haon Ton Dinh), came pretty close to the maximum with a rating of 4365. The other teams in the division were very evenly matched with ratings of 4269, 4267, 4225, 4232, 4199 respectively for teams “americantaletenis.com” (Scott Endicott & Grantley Charles), “Koji and Sai” (Koji Kido & Sai Kwock), “Power Surge” (Tri Dinh & Earl Alto), “Tx Wesleyan University” (Michael Amren & Scott Malek), and “Chern-imoto” (Konstantin Chernomorskiy & Masaru Hashimoto).

Of the many highlights in Division one, prominent was the wonderful doubles play. It is not often that one gets to see counter-looping or lobbing in doubles play, but that’s exactly what the crowd was treated to in the match between Saigon Boys and Power Surge. Both teams were very aggressive, and they took turns forcing the action on the other team. But neither team would back down. So they lobbed or fished several shots in succession, unwilling to give away any easy points. It was certainly a thrilling match. In the end, Saigon Boys took the doubles 3 games to 1, and the match 3 sets to 1.

Another thrilling match was the singles set between Grantley Charles of americantaletenis.com and Earl Alto of Power Surge. This match occurred later in the day and Grantley was visibly exhausted, whereas teenage Earl was bounding with energy.

So, Grantley was clearly going with the “end it now” strategy, ripping backhand loops to both corners of the table. Whether the shot went in or not, the point “ended now.” Earl, on the other hand, was clearly going for the “let’s go five” strategy, just hanging there in, keeping calm, keeping loose, keeping cool. In the end, they went the full five, and Earl came out on top. What a battle!

At the end of it all, Saigon Boys came out top, winning all five of their matches. Tuan Le did an excellent job of anchoring the team, and basically never gave the other teams an opening for an upset. Power Surge, anchored by Tri Dinh and energized by Earl Alto, came in second with a record of 4-1.

Jumping briefly to Division Three, “Jock and Ron” (Jock Oubichon & Ron Spencer) took first place over “Big Ticket” (Ferdinand Trinidad & Phil van de Wiele). The team “Twin Sons of Different Moons” (Gerry Chua & Cesar Beraun) provided the inspiration to start a Best Team Name Award at the next tournament. Another story concerning team names ... the team “Chern-imoto” (Konstantin Chernomorskiy & Masaru Hashimoto) originally entered without a team name, so as tournament director, I assigned the name “Chern-imoto.” Well, about half-way through the tournament, Masaru comes up to me and says, “OK, how about ‘Hashimoto’?”

In Division Two “Little Saigon” (Khanh Duong & Quoc Nguyen, 4108) went undefeated and took first place. They certainly made it look easy with their smooth, confident, attacking style. Note to self - table-tennis players from Saigon are tough.

Also playing in Division two was team “Jon and Don” of Ernesto Ebuen (2454) and ten-year-old Don Alto (1559). Apparently, Jon is Ernesto’s nickname. One might wonder why Ernesto would be playing in Division two, and it really was to give Jon, who is a fast developing junior, the chance to play against good players and gain some experience. Interestingly enough, it seemed to me that it was by playing in this second division that Ernesto showed his mettle both as a player and as a person.

Things were going pretty smoothly for Ernesto until his match against Davey Uemel Jr. of “Fearsome Forehand.” Davey had been mentally preparing all day for Ernesto, and so Davey was putting it all on the line in this one match. Ernesto was in a battle, but it wasn’t anything he hadn’t seen before or couldn’t handle. However, things turned for the worse on a simple edge ball. Davey and Ernesto were in an impressive rally, when Davey’s shot hit the edge. Now, I’ve seen top players dig up edge shots before, but this was not a returnable edge. In fact, Davey had already turned his back to the table. But Ernesto went for it. The consequence was a severely sprained ankle. And a lost point.

As I watched Ernesto writhe in pain on the floor, I firmly believed that the tournament was over for him. People were telling me that this was already the second time today that he had twisted that ankle. I knew that Ernesto didn’t get to be 2400+ by giving away free points, but going for an impossible edge and hurting himself seemed foolish. I mean, certainly he’d have to forfeit the match, and his team would have to withdraw, right?

He proved me wrong.

Not only did he get up and play, he won that match. On top of that, he went up to the tournament referee, Linda Hsing, and asked, “If we [Jon and Don], default our last match, do we finish second or third?” (There is no prize for third) When the answer was that they would be third if they defaulted, he picked up his paddle and limped off to play on one leg, “Jon and Don” won that match and finished second.

Thinking about this, I am convinced that Ernesto Ebuen did not continue to play so that he could get half of the $50 prize for second place. He played on because he didn’t want to let down his ten-year-old teammate Don. He was the leader of his team, and he wasn’t going to let his teammate go home empty and disappointed. So, he just sucked it up and played on, simple as that.

I guess this kind of selflessness and pure grit could be taken for granted in other sports such as baseball or football, but it doesn’t seem common in table tennis. I’m not sure what to say about that, other than I’d like to think about it some more.

Plans for the future ... Many players left asking when the next tournament would be. Everything is still on the drafting board, but because of the popularity of the team event, most likely the SDTTA will split the Team event and the Giant RR event into two separate tournaments. The Team event will likely expand into a two-day event, with qualifying rounds on Saturday, followed by main round play on Sunday. Keep your eyes and ears wide open, because these tournaments are going to be fun!

**Over 1700**

Division 1: 1st Ernesto Ebuen; 2nd Tuan Le; 3rd David Uemel, Jr.
Division 2: 1st Konstantin Chernomorskiy; 2nd Rudy Miranda; 3rd Michael Amren.
Division 3: 1st Khanh Duong; 2nd Vukman Soskic; 3rd Grantley Charles.
Division 4: 1st Samir Tai; 2nd Rendinald Tan; 3rd James Chai.
Division 5: 1st Andrew Murray; 2nd James Chai; 3rd Jacinto Lopez Jr.
Division 6: 1st Phelan Shi; 2nd Ira Framo; 3rd Trung Nguyen.

**Under 1700**

Division 1: 1st Gerry Chua; 2nd Alexandre Voronin; 3rd Pat Sirinurnd.
Division 2: 1st Bruce Dang; 2nd Don Alto; 3rd Howard Vu.
Division 3: 1st Edward Luong; 2nd Andrew Murray; 3rd Jacinto Lopez Jr.
Division 4: 1st Ryan Boeche; 2nd Bart Rothwell; 3rd Jude Balazy.

**Teams**

Division 1: 1st Saigon Boys (Tuan Le, Haon Ton Dinh); 2nd Power Surge (Tri Dinh, Earl Alto).
Division 2: 1st Little Saigon (Khanh Duong, Quoc Nguyen); 2nd Jon & Don (Ernesto “Jon” Ebuen, Don Alto).
Division 3: 1st Jock & Ron (Jock Oubichon, Ron Spencer); 2nd Big Ticket (Phil van de Wiele, Ira Framo).
Division 4: 1st Ralph Guilory (1753); 2nd Albert Silberman (1881).
COLORADO SPRINGS OPEN

Colorado Springs, CO • Oct. 18-19, 2003
By Larry Rose

There have always been high-level competitors at the Colorado Springs Open. This year was the strongest level in years. Joining two-time champion Francisco Mendez was 1993 European Top-12 champion Emilia Ciosu Gheorge, now living in Colorado Springs with her husband (USATT Executive Director Doru Gheorge) and son Patrick. Rounding out the top four seeds were two former Colorado Springs Open finalists: last year’s runner-up Scott Preiss (also a runner-up in 2000), and Aili Elliot, who you better remember as Li Ai. Aili recently married and changed her name. 1986/1987 runner-up Dhiren Narotam made a brief appearance, but instead of carrying his racket to the table, he was carrying his one-year-old daughter Mia along the sidelines. Along with the top four seeds came a surprise — Ying Peng, whose husband is a graduate student in Wisconsin, brought a very polished game to Colorado Springs, and brought an early exit to 1916-rated Derek Stanley before meeting Francisco Mendez in the Eighths. Trouble started early for the top seeds — Scott Preiss took eight games to get past Sanjiv Thakor, and Aili Elliot took eight games to dispatch Tom Wintrich. Toni Gresham and Roger Kuske took a game each from Gheorge and Mendez respectively. In the end, though, all four top seeds won their way to the semifinals. There, Mendez beat Preiss 5-0; 9,6,7,9; and Gheorge beat Elliot 5-1; 9,9,8,8,7,9. Both matches showcased the varied styles of these players. The final showdown between Gheorge and Mendez was spectacular — Emilia’s accuracy and backhand quickness and Aili’s power and speed ruled the day.

Many thanks to the helpful staff of the Hillside Community Center, as well as to the officials and staff: Bob Trethewey, Roger Kuske, Chris Salazar, Charlotte King and Liz Gresham.

Open Singles: Emilia Ciosu Gheorge d. Francisco Mendez, 5-6,8,6,3; 9,6,2; SF: Gheorge d. Aili Elliot, 9,9,8,8,7,9; Mendez d. Scott Preiss, 9,6,7,9.
Open Doubles: Francisco Mendez/Scott Preiss d. Emilia Ciosu Gheorge/Bob Lianza, 9,7,6,10; SF: Mendez/Preiss d. Scott Kressner/Roger Kuske, 5,6,5; Gheorge/Elliot d. Toni Gresham/Liz Gresham, 2,5.
Women’s RR Singles: 1st Keli Lianza 2-0; 2nd Kristi Lianza 1-1; 3rd Charlotte King 0-2.
U1800 (B Singles): Final: David Huggins d. Max Hamilton, 8,8,7,7.
D Singles: Lance LaCerte d. Michael King, 7,8,5.
E Singles: Farid Chegini d. Cameron Kruse, 6,0,9.
Under 18 Boys Jr. Regional Championships: 1st Alex Hureau 2-0; 2nd Philipp Hanan 1-1; 3rd Markus Hanan 0-2.

Under 14 Boys Jr. Regional Championships: 1st Austin Preiss 2-0; 2nd Roger Kuske 1-1; 3rd David Beamish 0-2.
2003 Paul Cracraft Memorial Sportsmanship Award: Max Hamilton.
U3200 Doubles: Ken Lewis/Markus Hanan d. Chris Bridges/Tom Madigan, 8,8,7,6; SF: Lewis/Hanan d. Keli Lianza/Liz Gresham, 5,3,4.

ST LOUIS FALL OPEN

St. Louis, MO • Nov. 8, 2003
By John Dichiaro

Playing in his first local U.S. tournament, former Malaysian team member Choor Sime Oh placed third in both singles and doubles (with junior Munkhbold Bayarsaikan) at the St. Louis Fall Open. "Sime," now a student in Columbia, MO, went undefeated through nine singles matches, dropping games to opponents but never facing a serious challenge from the top competition available: Parviz Mojaevicar (2222), Alex Kheyfets (2120), Laura Xiao (2083) and Vladimir Altman (2005).

Missing the opportunity to challenge Sime was third-seeded Mark Nordby (2209), who placed third in his round robin due to a tough five-game loss to Mojaevicar and a subsequent upset by Vladimir Altman. Altman was also impressive in a later upset against Alex Kheyfets for third place. Also playing well was Jie Zhu who placed third in his round robin after upset wins over Laura Xiao and Joseph Cochran.

In the 4000 doubles round robin, Oh (assigned a rating of 2400) defeated Parviz Mojaevicar (1533) to create a formidable lefty-righty combination that went undefeated through ten doubles matches. Placing second were brothers Joseph and Gordon Cochran, who showed great team chemistry despite being a theoretically weaker combination of an attacker and a defender. Facing Oh/Bayarsaikan in the round robin, the Cochrans had two match points, but Oh/Bayarsaikan escaped to win in five.

In the semifinals, the Cochrans cruised past the top-seeded pair of Mark Nordby and Adil Dhnanari, but in the final they faced the only pair that could beat them.

Another team that showed great chemistry were juniors Justen Yao and Raymond Pang, 10 and 11 years old respectively. Youth was well served in Class A doubles as Yao/Pang continued to beat pairs greater in both rating and experience, before they finally bowed out in the final to penholders Harry Chu and Qing Li, who sported a rating advantage of over 600 points.

Championship Singles: Choor Sime Oh d. Parviz Mojaevicar, 10,8,5,5,6; SF: Oh d. Vladimir Altman, 6,8,9,4; Mojaevicar d. Aleksander Kheyfets, 7,5,11,8.
Championship Doubles: Choor Sime Oh/Munkhbold Bayarsaikan d. Gordon Cochran/Joseph Cochran, 9,8,5.
Class A: Azraii Ali d. Hi Tran, 9,10,9; SF: Ali d. Mark Nordby, 5,10,9,10,9; Xian d. Alan Price, 4,9,11.
Class B: Kam Chan d. Harry Kosten, 10,2,5,12.
Class C: James Lin d. Dave Harte, 9,9,6,6.
Class A Doubles: Harry Chu/Qing Li d. Justen Yao/Raymond Pang, 5,8,5.
Championship (Class A) Runner-up Nick Snider, Champion Samson Dubina.

DAYTON GIANT RR OPEN

Dayton, OH • Nov. 8, 2003
By John Dichiaro

The annual fall Dayton Open was held on November 8 at the City of Dayton’s Burkardt Recreation Center. The 57 participants played on seven Butterfly Tables under a recently upgraded lighting system, which provided excellent, uniform lighting in both the gymnasium and the recreation room. Our thanks to the City of Dayton as well as to sponsor Butterfly, who provided the tournament balls. The participants were divided into six groups based on rating. The winner of the top group was again Samson Dubina of Canton, who had previously won the Dayton Open in April. Second and third place were taken by Nick Snider of Cincinnati and Don Hamilton of Dayton, respectively. Elena Mykhalievskaya, a young-power original from Odessa in the Ukraine and now residing in Athens, Ohio, and playing out of the Newport Club, went defeated in Group C. Her performance should vault her to the 1700s and a high ranking in the National Under 14 girls.

Group B: 1st Aleks Brodkin; Babak Fakharpour; 3rd Jason Lacey.
Group C: 1st Elena Mykhalievskaya; 2nd Paul Miller; 3rd Bud Henthorn.
Group D: 1st Sirish Rimal; 2nd Aydin Akayar; 3rd Stephen Cree.
Group E: 1st Ronald Joseph; 2nd Alicia Burnett; 3rd Todd Rielage.

Photo by John Dichiaro ©2003

USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE • January/February 2004
WELCOME to the BIG WHACK

By Jim Scott • Portland, OR

2002-2003 BIG WHACK

Welcome to the BIG WHACK

BY JIM SCOTT • PORTLAND, OR

BOY, the story this year could be as long as “Gone With the Wind.” We had so many interested schools and kids in the metro area that you could write about it forever. Once again we awarded three trophies for the first three places in four male events and four female events (24 awards) in our final competition in May.

Leading up to the BIG WHACK singles final were numerous team matches in our High and Middle School leagues and Club play at various schools, which qualified players for the final.

The teams were great. David Douglas H.S. boys (the 2001-2002 champion) faced central Catholic in the final, 4 on 4. Each team won eight matches in singles, causing a doubles tiebreaker. Douglas won the tiebreaker, 2-1, in a very tight third game. This team match was played immediately after the BIG WHACK singles at Portland State University.

The David Douglas girls finished second to Westview, 9-7. Westview won the final two matches 3-2 and 3-1. It was exciting! This occurred two weeks before the singles final.

In the BIG WHACK singles at PSU, all eight winners were new from the previous year and all finals were competitive.

High School

Geoff Schwind of Sunset H.S. used his Seemiller grip and overall consistency to defeat serve-and-kill specialist Nick Megert of Roosevelt. 16 players had survived their round-robin play prior to single knockout.

Darya Nesterenko of David Douglas H.S. won a tough match with Da Lin of Westview in their final. Darya plays with short pips, and Da has long pips on one side. Their tenacity and rubber frustrated the other girls.

Middle School

Thomas Nguyen, Five Oaks M.S., defeated the hard bat of Joseph Nguyen of Gregory Heights, 3-1. Thomas has become one of Portland’s best young players.

Hillary Nguyen of West Sylvan was down 2-0 to Valerie Chia of Stoller M.S. in the semis before winning. All five games were tight. Then Hillary defeated Lan Kai of team champion Robert Gray in a highly contested final.

Steve Sandvold of Robert Gray has had a great table tennis program at Gray for years. So, too, have Tammy West of Gregory Heights and Merleen Redden of West Sylvan. We at Portland Table Tennis Club work with them every year.

Elementary School

Michael Chen and Kathy Lu came all the way from Corvallis to play in the singles competition. Michael defeated Brian Chia of Findley Elementary in the final. A great victory since Brian is taking lessons from Simone Yang.

Nicole Pan of Image Elementary in Vancouver, WA defeated Kathy Lu in a very interesting and close final. Kathy had the backhand and Nicole had the forehand. Nicole started trying to hit Kathy’s forehand and it became the thin difference.

The Portland Table Tennis Club sponsors this program every year along with Seemiller, Palace, Bob Viducich, and certain other personal donors. This year, Dan-Vi Nguyen (TT Club President) and Alex Accetta (advisor) of PSU assisted us greatly with facilities, signage,
referees, and overall support for the BIG WHACK program. They sponsored Scott Preiss to do his usual whirlwind tour including clinics, appearances, and exhibitions. We did shows at several schools as well as PSU, Dornbecker Children’s Hospital, and Portland TT Club at Tualatin Hills Rec Center.

This year, PTTC did exhibitions at 30 locations before 10,000+ kids and adults. 26 schools were represented at the BIG WHACK singles and finals. I think there’s a relationship.

2003-2004 is a big year. We are targeting 16 high schools and eight middle schools for the Leagues. They will arrange their own matches. The four teams who win the most matches during September-April will make the team semifinals (in all categories). This will leave us with four boys’ and four girls’ teams in both high school and middle school categories or 16 teams altogether still in there by May!

Hey, we’ve been doing this since 1990.

Team Results

High School Boys
1st David Douglas 2nd Central Catholic 3rd Roosevelt
High School Girls
1st Westview 2nd David Douglas 3rd Benson Tech
Middle School Boys
1st Robert Gray 2nd Gregory Heights 3rd Five Oaks Middle School Girls
1st Robert Gray 2nd West Sylvan 3rd Gregory Heights

Singles Results

High School Boys (43 qualifiers) - Final: Geoff Schwind (Sunset) d. Nick Megert (Roosevelt), 7-1, 3-1, 6-3.
High School Girls (15 qualifiers) - Final: Darya Nesterenko (Douglas) d. Da Lin (Westview), 8,7-7.
Middle School Boys (22 qualifiers) - Final: Thomas Nguyen (Five Oaks) d. Joseph Nguyen (Gregory Heights), 6,12,10.

High School Girls (22 qualifiers) - Final: Scott Buys (C. Catholic) d. Cuong Ton (Schwind), 3,10,8.
Middle School Girls (9 qualifiers) - Final: Hilary Nguyen (W. Sylvan) d. LanKai Xu (Findley), 8,12,-5, 3rd Jia Jia Yin (R. Gray) d. Valerie Chia (Stoller), 6,8,-5,8.
Middle School Boys (9 qualifiers) - Final: Michael Chen (Hoover) d. Brian Chia (Findley), 7,7,4.

Elementary Boys (16 qualifiers) - Final: Michael Chen (Hoover) d. Brian Chia (Findley), 7,7,4.
Elementary Girls (8 qualifiers) - Final: Nicole Pan (Image) d. Kathy Lu (Hoover), 9,10,-5,5.

Teachers - Men (9 qualifiers) - Final: Les Seligman (Roosevelt) d. Todd Toburen (Parent), 6,7.
Teachers - Women (4 qualifiers) - Final: Laura Jaeger (C. Catholic) d. Dora Morisioi (Multnomah Athletic Club), 4,8.

Teachers - Women (4 qualifiers) - Final: Laura Jaeger (C. Catholic) d. Dora Morisioi (Multnomah Athletic Club), 4,8.

Teachers - Men (9 qualifiers) - Final: Les Seligman (Roosevelt) d. Todd Toburen (Parent), 6,7.
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Teachers - Women (4 qualifiers) - Final: Laura Jaeger (C. Catholic) d. Dora Morisioi (Multnomah Athletic Club), 4,8.

Recently, Marta relocated to Houston where she works and practices table tennis. Her excellent athletic abilities coupled with her pleasant demeanor are real assets for the sport of table tennis in Texas, where she is considered one of the top women players.

Our youngest participant was Martha E. Salas, age 19, from San Nicolas de Los Garza, Mexico, and the oldest (young at heart) was Arthur Buster Chase, age 86, from San Antonio, Texas, who placed 2nd in Division “C.”

Table tennis is for all age’s (8 to 80+), and the Harlingen Table Tennis Club welcomes anyone & everyone who might be interested in learning about table tennis. We have a USATT Certified Coach and players who would be willing to assist players in becoming more efficient in playing this sport. We are the only active USATT Club in the Rio Grande Valley that plans two Officially Sanctioned Tournaments yearly. Contact Bob Salmeron at 956-428-2002 or check out our website at www.harlingenttc.org.

Our next tournament is on March 13-14, 2004, “The Harlingen Spring Open Round Robin Table Tennis Tournament.” Plan to attend this event.

Class A: 1st Marta Hitomi ($300); 2nd Cesar T. Serna ($200); 3rd Randall Medcalf ($100).
Class B: 1st Rodolfo Garza; 2nd Eduardo Ramos.
Class C: 1st Nisphant S. Karve; 2nd Arthur Chase.
Class D: 1st Chris Balcos; 2nd John McDonald.
Class E: 1st Carolyn Arwood; 2nd Reggie Garza.

Division A Champion Marta Massurda ($300), Runner-up Cesar T. Serna ($200), and 3rd place Randall Medcalf ($100).
Division B Champion Rodolfo Garza, Runner-up Eduardo Ramos;
Division C Champion Nishant Karve, Runner-up Arthur Chase;
Division D Champion Chris Balcos, Runner-up John McDonald;
Division E Champion Carolyn Arwood, Runner-up Reggie Garza.

USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE • January/February 2004
THREE RIVERS FALL OPEN
Fort Wayne, IN • Oct. 4, 2003
By Dirk Petersen

The Sixth Annual Three Rivers Table Tennis Center Fall Tournament was held in Fort Wayne, IN on October 4, 2003. It featured recreational, rating events and two doubles events. There were 60 rated and 13 unrated players. Sasa Drinic of Chicago, IL won both the Elite and Open Singles, defeating Samson Dubina of Canton, OH in both the Elite final, 9-5, 3-5, 3-5, and in the Open final, 8-8, 8-8. Sasa and his partner, Daniel Koscieski, were runner-up in Under 3800 Doubles, losing to Hong Artman and Keith Brewster in the Final. Open Doubles was won by Mark Artnian and Nick Snider over Grantley Charles and Scott Endicott.

Elite Over 2100: 1st Sasa Drinic; 2nd Samson Dubina; 3rd Don Hamilton.
Open Doubles: 1st Mark Artman/Nick Snider; 2nd Grantley Charles/Scott Endicott.
U2100: 1st Jens Kujat; 2nd Grantley Charles.
U1950: 1st Stan Pease; 2nd Amanda Dubina.
U1800: 1st A.J. Brewer; 2nd Ron Arcao.
U1600: 1st Chris Pommer; 2nd Randy Webb.
U1400: 1st Steve Zwilling; 2nd Walter Rey.
U1200: 1st Daniel Koscieski; 2nd Doug Kenfield.
U1000: 1st Trevor Bryant; 2nd Danny Dalkin.
Recreational: 1st Sirish Rimal; 2nd Greg Crawford.
U3800 Doubles: 1st Hong Artman/Keith Brewster; 2nd Sasa Drinic/Daniel Koscieski.

SEMINOLE CLASSIC
Tallahassee, FL • Oct. 4, 2003
By Willy Leparulo

The Seminole Table Tennis Classic, sponsored by Sports Authority and hosted by the Florida State University Table Tennis program, was a double Round Robin tournament featuring eight groups of five followed by ten groups of four in the afternoon session. Forty players from three area universities and three Southeastern States joined in the fun. Jorge Zavala, Florida State University's top USATT rated player (2057) won his 10th Seminole Table Tennis Classic tournament, defeating Jacksonville Table Tennis club president Richie Johns (1987), three games to zero. Zavala, former Mexican national team player and coach, playing in his last tournament as a member of the FSU club before moving back to Mexico, showed much grit and determination to battle through tough opponents. Adi Nasab (1944), University of Florida's #1 player, defeated Zavala in the Open RR pitting Zavala against Peruvian native, Marisol Delzo (2011). Zavala defeated Delzo 3-0 and went on to face Richie Johns in the final, ultimately defeating him 3-0 as well.

Open: 1st Jorge Zavala; 2nd Johny Billy; 3rd Joe Mozur.
Class A: 1st Carl Simons; 2nd Yasar Bodur.
Class C: 1st Diego Langoni; 2nd Dave Markell.
Class D: 1st Jack Shi; 2nd Gordon Lamotta.

USATT Board of Directors Motions

Oct. 11, 2003, Teleconference

Motion I: Moved that the USATT acknowledge that the tables belong to the City of San Diego and are to be returned to the Balboa Park Activity Center, into the custody of the San Diego TTA. Proposed by Barney D. Reed; seconded by Robert Mayer.
Passed: 7-0-0. In favor: Sheri Pittman, Tong Lee, Tim Boggan, Robert Mayer, Barney D. Reed, Hank McCoullum, and Jimmy McClure.

Board of Directors Meeting
Colorado Springs, CO, Nov. 21-22, 2003

Board Members Present (9): Sheri Pittman (SP), Tong Lee (TL), Tim Boggan (Tim B), Barney D. Reed (BR), Jimmy McClure (JM), Todd Sweeiers (TS), Tawny Bunn (Tawny B), Bob Fox (BF), Willy Leparulo (WL). Board Members Absent (4): Jiing Wang, George Brathwaite, Robert Mayer, Eric Owens.

Motion I: Moved that the Oct. 11, 2003 Teleconference Minutes be approved. Proposed by Tim B; seconded by BF. Passed: 9-0-0.

Motion II: Moved that Willy Leparulo be appointed Community Based Programs' Representative on the Board. Proposed by SP; seconded by JM. Passed: 9-0-0.

Motion III: Moved that Tim Boggan in Shen's place should she be out of the room during the Meeting. Proposed by SP; seconded by TS. Passed: 9-0-0.

Motion IV: Moved that Board members show, by a round of applause, their appreciation for the work of former Interim Group B Vice President Hank McCoullum. Proposed by TL; seconded by TS. Passed: 9-0-0.

Motion V: Moved that U.S. Pan Am medalists be given a total bonus amount of $3500. Proposed by TL; seconded by TS. Passed: 9-0-0 (Tawny B momentarily absent).

Motion VI: Moved that Feb. 1st, 2004 be the Implementation Date for new USATT membership fees and categories. These are: Adult: $40. Millennium: $650. Three-year: $100. Collegiate: $20 (no increase). Three-year Junior: $50. Family Membership (three years): $20 (no increase). Club: $50. Family Membership (this Membership is for parents of juniors and other supporters who don't play in sanctioned events, or coach, or officiate, or serve on USATT committees, or on the USATT Board of Directors; they're entitled to 6 issues of the magazine, and the right to vote for Association officers). Proposed by TL; seconded by Tim B. Passed: 9-0-0.

Motion VII: Moved that the Budget for 2004 be accepted. Proposed by TL; seconded by JM. Passed: 9-0-0.

Motion VIII: Moved that John Allen be appointed USATT Coaching Committee Chair. Proposed by SP; seconded by Tim B. Passed: 8-0-0 (BF momentarily out of the room).

Motion IX: Moved that Willy Leparulo be appointed Collegiate Grassroots Committee Chair. Proposed by SP; seconded by JM. Passed: 8-0-0 (BF momentarily out of the room).

Motion X: Moved that Dennis Davis be appointed Collegiate NCAA Committee Chair. Proposed by SP; seconded by WL. Passed: 9-0-0.

Motion XI: Moved that Danny Seemiller and Doru Gheorghe be appointed USATT Olympic Games Coaches. Proposed by BF; seconded by Tawny B. Passed: 9-0-0.

Motion XII: Moved that, since Wendell Dillon resigned, Tim Boggan be appointed Nominating and Election Committee Chair. Proposed by SP; seconded by BF. Passed: 9-0-0.

In addition to some understandable discussion about this appointment, it was suddenly pointed out that, even if Tim decided not to run for re-election, under Standing Rule #23 of the Nominating/Elections Committee, he could not serve as Chair of this committee and remain on the Board of Directors. As Tim chose not to resign from the Board, the Chair ruled the motion out of order. As a result, the Motion is null and void. A Chair for the Nominating Committee is still needed.

Motion XIII: Moved that Sheri Pittman and Tim Boggan be USATT Delegates to the ITTF's 2004 AGM Meeting in Qatar. Proposed by SP; seconded by JM. Passed: 9-0-0.

Motion XIV: Moved that the Board add an Amendment—Section 4, Reciprocal Discipline— to Chapter XVIII of our By-Laws. This means, for example, that if a player is suspended from the ITTF, he/she is also suspended from the USATT. Proposed by BF; seconded by BR. Passed: 9-0-0.

Motion XV: Moved, in order to comply with USOC regulations, that Amendments to Bylaws Chapter II-1-A and Chapter VIII-18 be approved, as well as Amendments to the Standing Rules of the Nominating and Elections Committee. Proposed by SP; seconded by BF. Passed: 8-0-0 (TS momentarily absent).

Motion XVI: Moved that Doru Gheorghe be nominated as Coach of the Year. (Doru was not in the room when this Motion was proposed, discussed, and affirmed.) Proposed by BF; seconded by JM. Passed: 9-0-0.

Motion XVII: Moved that Mitch Seidenfeld be nominated as Developmental Coach of the Year. Proposed by BF; seconded by JM. Passed: 8-0-0 (BR absent from discussion; did not vote).

Motion XVIII: Moved that the Board adjourn. Proposed by BF; seconded by TS. Passed: 9-0-0.
2003 MILLCREEK OPEN
Erie, PA • Oct. 18-19, 2003 • By Sam Steiner

The presence of two new sponsors added extra zest to this year’s Erie tournament.
Scott Enterprises of Erie, owners of several local hotels and restaurants, doubled the cash payout in the entire Open Singles event, resulting in a $1000 first-place prize. Barriers and equipment donations from Butterfly USA, along with free color TV giveaways and the ever-popular tournament party, put the icing on the cake for our best tournament ever.

Open Champion Pradeeban Peter-Paul, with fellow Canadian and quarterfinalist Petra Cada.

With 144 entries playing on 20 tables, the tournament staff worked hard to keep things on track and managed to stay within ½ hour of the schedule.

In the Open event, top seeds De Tran, Khoa Nguyen, and 2715-rated Pradeeban Peter-Paul of Canada all made the round robin final with relative ease, where the big money was to be found. Defending Erie champion Dan Seemiller and Brian Pace had a real dogfight to get the fourth money spot. With our sponsors looking on, Brian and Dan fought tooth and nail down to the seventh game in one of those matches you hate to see anyone lose. But only one could advance, with Dan winning the final game.

Peter-Paul and Khoa dominated the final round robin culminating in a match between them for first and second, where Khoa scored repeatedly with his powerful loops, but Peter-Paul’s tricky serves and control game finally earned him the $1000 check with a 4-2 win that was closer than the scores indicated.

Other play of note was A.J. Brewer’s $300 savings bond ($150 cash) win in the Juniors. Besides his sharp offensive game, A.J. has a calm demeanor and self-control unheard-of in a 10 year old. We will see lots more of this imp in the future.

Thanks to our sponsors and our hard-working tournament staff and promoters who all contributed to making this tournament a first-class event.

Open Singles – Final RR: 1st Pradeeban Peter-Paul, 3-0 (d. Nguyen 6-7, 9-11, 9,9; d. Seemiller, 7-7,9,7-9); 2nd Tran 3-4,8; 2nd Khoa Nguyen 2-1 (d. Seemiller, 8,4,5,3; d. Tran, 4,4,4,4); 3rd Dan Seemiller, 1-2 (d. Tran, 9,9,3-6,9); 4th De Tran, 0-3. QF: Peter-Paul d Terence Kalicharan, n.s.; Seemiller d. Brian Pace, 4-3; Tran d. Petra Cada, 7,9,9,10; Nguyen d. Randy Seemiller, 4-1.

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The independent testing agency for Olympic sport in the United States

Created in the fall of 2000, the United States Anti-Doping Agency is responsible for managing the testing and adjudication process for U.S. Olympic, Pan American and Paralympic athletes. USADA is equally dedicated to preserving the integrity of sport through research initiatives and educational programs.

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USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE • January/February 2004

Photo by Miklos Balogh 2003

Open Warmup: Group One: 1st Dan Seemiller; 2nd Don Hamilton; Group Two: 1st De Tran; 2nd Amanda Dubina; Group Three: 1st Brian Pace; 2nd Tom Yost; Group Four: 1st Roy Schlabach; 2nd Mark Northby; Group Five: 1st Sanson Dubina; 2nd Chandra Krishnan.

U1800: Tadao Inui d. Ravi Syal, 7,8,-9,6.
U1600: Isaac Krave d. Michael Obricki, 6,8,-4,10.
U1450: Jan Meier d. Justin Bertschi, 10,8,15,4.
U1200: Don Hamilton d. Tom Yost, 8,6,7.
U2000: Final: Winston Kalicharan d. Amanda Dubina, 4-8,2,5; SF: Kalicharan d. Michael Mast, 11,7,9; Dubina d. Jim Hamilton, -9,6,8,1.
U1800: Final: Winston Kalicharan d. Amanda Dubina, 4-8,2,5; SF: Kalicharan d. Michael Mast, 11,7,9; Dubina d. Jim Hamilton, -9,6,8,1.
U1750: Mani Anantharanan d. Joe Grandalski, 9,9,8,6.
U1600: Isaac Krave d. Michael Obricki, 6,8,-4,10.
U1450: Jan Meier d. Justin Bertschi, 10,8,15,4.
U1300: John Carey d. Prashant Chikhale, -10,4,3,7,8.
U1100: Dan Barnes d. Beri Stein, -9,-9,8,7,8.
U900: Fu-Hsien Tsai d. Chad Moore, -7,7,6,12.
U700: 1st Aaron Prose (4-0); 2nd Bryan Simcox (3-1).
U500: Carlos Lopez d. De Tran, -7,7,6,12.
U400: Tom Yost d. Michael Must, -7,7,6,12.
U200: Mark Northby d. Daniel Williams, -7,7,6,12.
U100: Brian Pace d. A.J. Brewer, -7,7,6,12.
U2200 Final: Don Hamilton d. Tom Yost, 8,6,7; SF: Hamilton d. John Ramirez, 5,7,7; Yost d. Chip Coulter, 7,1,7.
U2000 Final: Winston Kalicharan d. Amanda Dubina, 4-8,2,5; SF: Kalicharan d. Michael Mast, 11,7,9; Dubina d. Jim Hamilton, -9,6,8,1.
U1800 Final: Tadao Inui d. Ravi Syal, 7,8,-9,6.

Brian Pace loops against Dan Seemiller in the quarterfinals.

The Chopping of Belarus' World #39

By Wei Wang, USATT Certified National Coach and Hall of Famer

Viktoria Pavlovich

Photos by Diego Schaaf © 2003
When the ITTF decided to increase the table tennis ball size to 40mm, there were many speculations about the effect on different styles. Some thought it would be the end of the chopper, because the heavier ball would actually be faster early in its trajectory and only slow down farther back, when it had already passed the opponent. Well, that may be so, but the strong showing of choppers at the World Championships in Paris indicates that they have learned to deal with the problem and seem to have found a way to take full advantage of the fact that the larger ball’s increased air resistance slows it down more quickly in the back court. The last 32 of the men’s draw still had five choppers, Chen Weixing of Austria made it into the quarterfinals, and Joo Se Hyuk (KOR) even got the silver medal after taking out Chuan Chih-Yuin, Ma Lin and Kalinikos Kireanga. For this picture sequence we chose 25-year-old Viktoria Pavlovich of Belarus for the outstanding clarity of her stroke. She made it into the last 16. 

One of the reasons, why there are generally fewer choppers is that they take longer to develop, since they have to learn two complete styles - primarily defense, but in order to survive, they need to learn to attack, too. Attack players, too, should look to “the other side” and take time to familiarize themselves with the basics of chopping, because there are situations in which this is a viable last resort to survive a point. A well-played chop can give you a chance to come back to the table after having been driven backward and start the point over on equal footing with your opponent, or you might even draw an error with that drastic change up.

Understanding their technique also makes it easier to play against choppers. Their main strategy is to outlast the attacker and draw him into an error by varying the spin and placement. Their trademark is consistency. They will slow down the pace to make it difficult for the attacker to find his rhythm, and they will return everything until the attacker gets off balance or just plain runs out of patience and makes a bad shot. This can take a while, and they don't mind. Often, a chopper will lose the first game, but become more and more effective as he finds his range and tunes in to the attacker’s spin and pace. Once they have found their range, they can bring their variation to bear. Most choppers play with some sort of pips on the backhand. By twirling the racket during the point, they demand a tremendous degree of concentration from the attacker, because he must see which side they used to play the ball.

In addition, choppers have become extremely dangerous attackers. If they have placed a ball so well that they forced the attacker to push, the situation becomes critical. Unless that push was played absolutely perfectly - and often it is not, because it is a last-second defensive measure taken, because an attack is impossible from the attacker’s current position - so, unless the push was perfect, it can present a relatively easy target for a chopper to rush in and power the ball away. As those who have had the pleasure of seeing Joo Se Hyuk, even a relatively good drop shot presents little problems for him, because he is so incredibly fast that he can rush in and loop the ball at its highest point even when it’s still over the table.

Let’s have a look at the chopper’s technique. It is designed to create various degrees of underspin. The key to both forehand and backhand chopping is to let the ball drop low. As you can see in frame 7, Viktoria plays the ball below knee level on the forehand, a little higher on the backhand (frame 19). The forehand stroke starts by dropping the right shoulder and raising the racket to head level (5). The racket is vertical and the elbow points straight down. Now she initiates the downward movement with her upper arm, keeping the elbow at a 90-degree angle. At contact she straightens out her arm and follows through, sweeping past the side of the ball and “lifting” the ball toward the net. The movement actually maintains the same spin direction that is on the ball from the opponent’s loop but reverses the direction of flight. If the chop is quick enough, it can add to the existing spin and make for a super heavy ball. By changing the racket angle on contact, variations in the spin can be introduced, and since contact is so low, the attacker sometimes can’t see it, which makes the ball hard to read. 

The follow through is critical in the design of the complete stroke trajectory, and it helps regain the balance after contact.

On the backhand, Pavlovich again raises the hand to head level with her elbow pointing straight down. Here, the stroke happens mostly by straightening out the elbow (18-20). At contact, the wrist turns slightly outward (19-20), which allows the racket to slide under the ball. Again, the follow through plays an important role in the whole stroke.

To practice chopping, team up with a looper and work on one side at a time. Concentrate on developing the feel and try to figure out how to keep the ball low. Although you may not use the technique very frequently, you will be happy when you have survived an otherwise lost point by using this additional tool.

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Junior of the Month:

By Tommy Perkins

Wendy Eav

Age/DOB: 15/March 5, 1988
Residence: Los Angeles, CA
Local Club: Los Angeles Table Tennis Association & Cambodian Ethnic Chinese Association
Highest rating: 2085
Current rating: 2029
Equipment: Blade - Primorac Carbon FL
Forehand rubber - Sriver
Backhand rubber - Rein
Style of play: Close to the table, forehand loop/hit and backhand hit/block

At what age did you start playing Table Tennis? What or who got you started in the sport?
I started hitting balls around the age of seven. I never took it serious until I was twelve. My dad got me started in the sport.

Who are your former coaches? Current coaches?
My first coach was Zhang De Ying. After Zhang De Ying moved to China my coaches were Helen Tao and Jessie Hao. Currently my coaches are Tawny Banh and Crystal Huang. Tawny and Crystal inspire me to work hard, play my best, and give it all I’ve got. If they see that I’m not trying, they don’t hesitate to make me do push-ups, run laps, or do extra multiball drills. They take the time to talk to each other and discuss drills that will help me improve. This extra initiative on their part makes me want to work harder. That is why I love their coaching methods and wouldn’t change anything about their style.

What drives you to keep training and why are those motivational factors important to you?
The feeling of accomplishment is a big factor. Training can be really tough and sometimes it’s so bad that you feel like giving up. But that feeling doesn’t last long. Crystal tells me, “You can cry during training, but you’ll be laughing when you win.” It sounds a lot better in Mandarin actually. She also tells me that “winning isn’t everything,” and “if you feel that you played extremely well, but lost, it’s not because you didn’t work hard enough, it’s because your opponent was better!”

Who do you practice with? How often? What techniques are you trying to improve?
I train two days a week with Tawny and two days a week with Crystal. The days that I have spare time and I am not training with my coaches I will play practice matches at my club. Right now, I am working on my forehand loop against underspin.

Who is your toughest opponent? Do you enjoy the competition?
My toughest opponent is Atha Fong. We both live in California and are about the same age. So we compete against each other a lot. I do enjoy the competition because our levels are pretty much identical which makes our matches exciting. Our rallies are long lasting, which keeps me on my toes and helps me build endurance. The long rallies help me learn patience by not letting the intensity of the game get to me.

What are your table tennis goals? Non-Table Tennis?
My goal is to make the 2008 Olympic Team. I plan on playing more local tournaments to gain more game experience. That way, I’ll feel more composed and less anxious before a game, I’ll be used to the competition setting and be able to play better in major tournaments. My most important priorities outside of table tennis are to complete high school and attend college. I want to be as successful as my sister is!

What are your most prized table tennis accomplishments?
My most prized table tennis accomplishments would have to be winning two gold, one silver, and two bronze medals at the 2003 Junior Olympics. I’m really proud of them because it was my first time there and I had never won that many prizes in one tournament. Outside of table tennis, my greatest accomplishment was winning a $2,000 scholarship from Gray Davis for outstanding achievement in school.

What training have you had internationally? What do you think of international competition?
In July of 2000, I trained in Shanghai, China at my ex-coaches club (Zhang De Ying) for a month and a half. And in July of 2002, John Leach, Sergey Gutkin, Barbara Wei, and I went to Japan to train at the Butterfly Dohjo for 3 weeks. From my experience at the 2002 Junior Pan Am Games, I think international competition is a great way of learning the different styles players my age utilize in different countries.

What upcoming tournaments will you be playing in?
I’ll be going to Baltimore for the North American Teams and the 2004 Junior Girls’ Team Trials. From there I will be attending the 2003 Nationals in Las Vegas.

Who are your role models?
My role model is my older sister, Jenny. Every time I have a problem, especially when it has to do with homework, I’d run to her. I love that she is always there and somehow always knows the answer. (Even with this interview?) I respect her so much, especially since she has made it into college without the help of an older sibling, which is something I won’t have to do.

Besides table tennis, what are your hobbies?
I love swimming and listening to music. Sleeping is pretty fun, too!

How does table tennis fit into your future plans? How would you describe the sport?
My future plans are to attend college. With table tennis as an extracurricular activity, it’s one less thing to worry about. Also, if I want to be successful, I need to be disciplined. Table tennis requires concentration and cooperation. I’ve learned to cooperate with my coaches, just like I’ve learned to cooperate with my teachers. Keeping focus in table tennis is comparable to concentrating on schoolwork. Table tennis challenges you mentally and physically. To win a match, you need to be able to think of a strategy. You need to know what your opponent’s weakness is and use it to your advantage. Once you’ve figured that out you then have to know how to play it out. Before you can play it out though, you need to know your basics. Without it, you can’t do anything! So basically, table tennis is not a simple sport and I’m easily offended when anyone says table tennis isn’t a sport.

Anything else?
Thanks to my family for supporting me 100%. Also I would like to thank everyone at LAITTA, C.E.C.A. and Alhambor Park. I’ve always wanted to be junior of the month, so thank you USATT! One more thing: I love ducks, and I hope you do too!
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Mark V 1.0, 1.5, 1.8, 2.0, max
Through the years, a large number of champions, including World Champion Jean-Philippe Gatien, have been winning with Mark V. The rubber sheet has continuously been improved as the demands of top players have evolved. Mark V represents the highest quality of rubber production and is a leader among table tennis rubber sheets. Mark V is for the aggressive player, who uses a fast technique close-to-the-table.

Mark V 30; 2.0, max
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Mark V M2 2.0, max
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