USA’s Wang Chen teamed with Austria’s Liu Jia to win Women’s Doubles at the USA Pro Tour, held at the Killerspin US Open.
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ON THE COVER:
USA ITTF Pro Tour Women's Doubles Champions Wang Chen (USA)
& Liu Jia (AUT) by Gerry Chua ©2004
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The Waldner Offensive 40 is especially designed for attackers who require a very fast wood with excellent control.

A 7-ply blade created with thin, very hard, outer plies combined with semi-soft layers of wood. Two additional thin wood plies eliminate unwanted vibration. This results in a dynamic 7-ply blade for all types of attackers.

Like its namesake, Jan-Ove Waldner, it combines power and feel in a unique manner.

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Buddy Melamed in Houston Hall of Fame

By Tim Boggan

On Sunday, June 13, 2004, at The Kaplan Theatre in Houston, Jack “Buddy” Melamed was inducted into the Ronnie Arrow Houston Jewish Sports Hall of Fame.

Of course what won the day for him wasn’t only his baseball, basketball, and bowling background (how’s a 724 series strike you?), but his table tennis accomplishments.

Melamed was President of the Houston TTA for at least 15 years, ran a local Senior Olympics almost that long, ran the Maccabi Games, and also the National Transplant Games.

In the course of his middle-aged career (he didn’t start playing table tennis until he was 42), he won 7 U.S. Open or Closed Championships, the Over 40 Texas State Singles Championship 6 times, the Doubles 9 times, and for years he dominated the Houston Senior Olympics.

No more playing for Buddy now, though, ‘cause he’s got really bad knees—the cartilage is worn down to nothing. Dr. Grady Gordon, quite a U.S. Champion in his own right, was there at the Induction Ceremony and, as he helped Buddy to the podium to receive his Award, he might have whispered, “Fix the knees! Get the operations! Play Doubles with me again!”
USATT Club of the Month:
West Jersey Table Tennis Club
By Robert Hodgson, Vice President

The WJTTTC has been around since 1966, and in our current location for the last 22 years. The club rents the gymnasium at the United Methodist Church in Pennsauken, New Jersey (a few miles east of Philadelphia, PA) Tuesdays & Thursdays and sets up takes down eight tables & barriers. Netting is placed on the sides of the tables to reduce ball travel and interference with the adjacent players. Half of the tables are allocated for the more advanced players. Typically 15-20 players participate on most nights. The range of players is from 2300 to novice and from juniors to 80-year-old seniors. The goal of our club is to: “Provide the best possible playing conditions for all individuals equally.”

For the last three years, the club has held round robin matches for “Club Rating Points” on the first and third Thursday of the month. Two thirds of the USATT Rating match points were used and applied on a per game basis. This provided intensity of play, especially for the higher players. Because a League type system was already in place, it was a relatively smooth transition to change to the USATT League format starting January 2004.

Because we play in a Church gymnasium the club is unable to have a USATT tournament because someone a bit more important has priority for the weekend. For several years we were unable to be a USATT affiliated club because we were unable to conduct the required one sanctioned tournament a year.

Additional detailed information can be found on the club's web site: http://robert_hodgson.tripod.com/wjtttc or by visiting www.usatt.org/clubs, and clicking on New Jersey.

USATT 2004 Junior & Cadet National Team Coaches

USA Table Tennis has named the 2004 Junior & Cadet National Team Coaches. The coaches were selected by USATT’s Elite Athlete Committee. The coaches are:

- **Junior Girls** – Masaki Tajima
- **Junior Boys** – Mark Nordby
- **Cadet Girls** – Lily Yip
- **Cadet Boys** – Zhang Ping

These coaches will coach the USA Junior & Cadet teams at various camps and tournaments, including at the upcoming Killerspin US Open. (Juniors must be 18 & under, cadets 15 & under, as of Jan. 1 of the current year, so juniors must be born on or after Jan. 1, 1986, and cadets Jan. 1, 1989.)

Congratulations to these coaches!

USATT League of the Month:
Highland Table Tennis Center League
By Keith Jones, President

The Highland Table Tennis Center League is the best place to play competitive table tennis in Northwest Indiana. The league was the first official USATT League in the state of Indiana. The HTTC is located thirty minutes south of Chicago. We started as just an open play center on Monday nights. Then the center added the USATT League one Tuesday a month in the fall of 2003. Currently the league takes place on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month. There are usually around twenty to thirty players. Players are split into three to four groups depending on their league rating. The HTTC league participants are males, females, young and old, ranging in rating from 800-1700. There is always someone to play. League play starts at six o’clock. When the players are done with their league matches, they can play open matches until nine o’clock.

I think what the players like is that the league is run with professionalism. The courts have plenty of space and cardboard barriers surround every court. The forms and courts are ready for play when they walk in the door. Posting stats and adding them to the league website quickly is always appreciated. When players are not battling in a league match they can watch table tennis videos that play continually throughout the night. Currently we are showing the Killerspin Extreme Invitational Tournament.

The next big thing for the league is the start of the League Grand Finals. This will be an invitational tournament held on December 11, 2004. To be eligible each player must participate in at least ten league nights throughout the year. The top twenty rated players will be split into A and B groups. The player’s fee will be $8 with prizes going to first and second. Other annual league awards that will be voted on by players will be: most improved, sportsmanship award, most matches/games won and the iron man award (most matches played).

I would like to see our league compete in USATT League/Team competitions against neighboring leagues. Right now the closest league would be South Bend (very tough to beat). We have only been around since May of 2003, but the future looks good. For more info go to www.highlandparks.org or email Kjones@highland.in.gov.
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- Great for home and club use
- ITTF Approved 1" Surface

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So Cal Open
San Diego, CA  October 9-10, 2004

EVENT  DATE  TIME  COST  1st  2nd
1  Open Singles RR  Sat  10:30 AM  $35  $1500  $600
2  Women's RR  Sat  1:30 PM  $25  $200  $80
3  U22 Men's RR  Sun  10:00 AM  $20  $100  $40
4  U22 Women's RR  Sun  10:00 AM  $20  $100  $40
5  U18 Boys' RR  Sat  9:00 AM  $20  $50  $20
6  U18 Girls' RR  Sat  9:00 AM  $20  $50  $20
7  U16 Boys' RR  Sun  1:00 PM  $20  A  A
8  U16 Girls' RR  Sun  1:00 PM  $20  A  A
9  U13 Boys' RR  Sat  12:00 PM  $20  A  A
10  U13 Girls' RR  Sat  12:00 PM  $20  A  A
11  U10 Boys' RR  Sun  11:30 AM  $20  A  A
12  U10 Girls' RR  Sun  11:30 AM  $20  A  A
13  Over 40 RR  Sun  10:00 AM  $22  $100  $40
14  Over 50 RR  Sat  9:00 AM  $22  $80  $30
15  Over 60 RR  Sun  1:00 PM  $22  $60  $25
16  U2500 SE  Sat  9:00 AM  $25  $200  $80
17  U2375 RR  Sat  6:30 PM  $25  $150  $60
18  U2250 RR  Sun  12:00 PM  $25  $125  $50
19  U2125 RR  Sun  1:30 PM  $25  $100  $40
20  U2000 RR  Sun  10:00 AM  $22  $100  $40
21  U1850 RR  Sat  2:30 PM  $20  A  A
22  U1700 RR  Sat  10:00 AM  $20  A  A
23  U1550 RR  Sat  3:00 PM  $20  A  A
24  U1400 RR  Sun  10:30 AM  $20  A  A
25  U1250 RR  Sun  6:00 PM  $20  A  A
26  U1100 RR  Sun  1:30 PM  $20  A  A
27  U950 RR  Sat  9:00 AM  $20  A  A
28  U800/Unrated RR  Sat  4:30 PM  $20  A  A
29  U4200 Doubles SE  Sun  9:00 AM  $15/ea  $60  $30
30  U3200 Doubles SE  Sun  9:00 AM  $15/ea  $60  $30

EVENTS:
- 1: Open Singles RR
- 2: Women's RR
- 3: U22 Men's RR
- 4: U22 Women's RR
- 5: U18 Boys' RR
- 6: U18 Girls' RR
- 7: U16 Boys' RR
- 8: U16 Girls' RR
- 9: U13 Boys' RR
- 10: U13 Girls' RR
- 11: U10 Boys' RR
- 12: U10 Girls' RR
- 13: Over 40 RR
- 14: Over 50 RR
- 15: Over 60 RR
- 16: U2500 SE
- 17: U2375 RR
- 18: U2250 RR
- 19: U2125 RR
- 20: U2000 RR
- 21: U1850 RR
- 22: U1700 RR
- 23: U1550 RR
- 24: U1400 RR
- 25: U1250 RR
- 26: U1100 RR
- 27: U950 RR
- 28: U800/Unrated RR
- 29: U4200 Doubles SE
- 30: U3200 Doubles SE

Contact: North American Table Tennis
Phone: 301-738-8250
Email: info@natabletennis.com

Tournament Info:

Check-in: Starts on Saturday, October 9, 2004 at 8AM. Proof of Membership: Athletes must be show proof of current membership with USATT.
Venue: Balboa Park Activity Center, 2145 Park Blvd, San Diego, CA 92101. Wood floor, excellent lighting. Official Tournament Equipment: Butterfly Tables and Stiga orange 40mm 3 star balls.
Entry Fee: $200
Ratings: Ratings from the September/October issue of the USATT Magazine will be used.

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.
- ITTF and NATT rules/policies apply.
- Refunds: After the entry deadline, no refunds.
- Referee: Linda Hsing, IU
- Event Staff: Richard Lee, Fong Hsu, Wendy Troy, and Alan Williams.

Please send completed entry form with payment to:
North American Table Tennis
401 N. Washington Street, Suite 110
Rockville, MD 20850
Deadline: FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2004

Name: ___________________________ Address: ___________________________
City: ___________________________ State: ______ Zip: ______
Phone Number: (____) _______ Gender: MALE / FEMALE
USATT ID: __________ Expiration: ______ Rating: ______ Date of Birth: ______
E-mail: _________________________
Make checks payable to NATT
Referee: Linda Hsing, IU
Event Staff: Richard Lee, Fong Hsu, Wendy Troy, and Alan Williams.

Name: ___________________________ Address: ___________________________
City: ___________________________ State: ______ Zip: ______
Phone Number: (____) _______ Gender: MALE / FEMALE
USATT ID: __________ Expiration: ______ Rating: ______ Date of Birth: ______
E-mail: _________________________
Make checks payable to NATT
Referee: Linda Hsing, IU
Event Staff: Richard Lee, Fong Hsu, Wendy Troy, and Alan Williams.

Total Event Entry Fee: $5
USATT Rating & Registration Fee: $________
USATT Membership Fee: $15
Tournament T-shirt: T-shirts $15 each
Make checks payable to NATT
Returned checks will be charged a $25 fee.

Name: ___________________________ Address: ___________________________
City: ___________________________ State: ______ Zip: ______
Phone Number: (____) _______ Gender: MALE / FEMALE
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City: ___________________________ State: ______ Zip: ______
Phone Number: (____) _______ Gender: MALE / FEMALE
USATT ID: __________ Expiration: ______ Rating: ______ Date of Birth: ______
E-mail: _________________________
Make checks payable to NATT
Referee: Linda Hsing, IU
Event Staff: Richard Lee, Fong Hsu, Wendy Troy, and Alan Williams.

Total Event Entry Fee: $5
USATT Rating & Registration Fee: $________
US ATT Membership Fee: $15
Tournament T-shirt: T-shirts $15 each
Make checks payable to NATT
Returned checks will be charged a $25 fee. Total: $________
**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Proof of Membership**

All participants must show identification of current membership for USATT, CTFA, or ITTF. Otherwise, USATT membership must be purchased. Tournament passes will not be accepted. You must supply your membership number or a $10 ID number lookup fee will be charged.

**Equipment**

All USATT and ITTF rules and regulations will be followed. Stiga Expert tables will be used with Stiga orange 40mm three-star balls. To purchase tournament tables, please ask to the left for details.

---

**Check-in**

Check-in starts Thursday from 7:00 PM to 10:00 PM. On Friday, check-in resumes in the morning at 7:30 AM. All participants must check-in before being allowed to play. There will also be individual check-in so that each player can pick up their own entry pass.

---

**TEAMS INFORMATION**

**Teams**

Please create a team name with less than 30 characters. Teams with an average rating over 2400 must select a name that represents a sponsor or place of origin. Team consists of 3-5 players. Seeding in the tournament will be decided by averaging the 3 highest ratings. Each tie will be 3 out of 5 games except for Division A playoffs. Each match will be 3 out of 5 games. The rating for the tournament will be subject to disqualification and fines.

**Divisions**

If your team is eligible for the Women’s, U-18 Boys’ or Girls’, or O-40 Seniors’ divisions, please circle the appropriate team type. The age cut-off date is November 26, 2004 for Juniors, December 31, 2004 for seniors. All teams will be placed into one draw and divisional prize money as stated below will be given to the team with the highest finish in the tournament for that particular division.

---

**ENTRY DEADLINE**

Entries must be postmarked by October 29, 2004. Any other entries postmarked by November 12, 2004 will be accepted on a space available basis with a $50 late fee. If an entry is submitted late, please call to confirm that it was received and accepted. There is a $50 penalty for returned checks. NO REFUNDS after October 29, 2004.

---

**TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>7:00 PM - 10:00 PM</td>
<td>Registration, Team Championships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>7:30 AM - 9:00 AM</td>
<td>Registration, Teams Championships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9:00 AM - 6:30 PM</td>
<td>Coaching Clinics Exhibitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6:30 PM - 10:00 PM</td>
<td>Teams Championships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>9:00 AM - 9:00 PM</td>
<td>Teams Championships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9:00 AM - 7:00 PM</td>
<td>Teams Championships</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**TOURNAMENT T-SHIRTS & PROGRAMS**

- Tournament T-shirt $15 each (write in quantity): SMLXLXXL
- Tournament programs

---

**PRIZE MONEY**

- Division A Champion $6,000
- Division B Champion $500
- Division C Champion $300
- Finalist $2,500
- Semifinalist $1,000
- Quarterfinalist $500
- Highest U-18 Girls’ and Boys’ Finish $500
- Highest O-40 Seniors Finish $500

---

**TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE**

- President: Richard Lee
- Director: Fong Hsu
- Registration: Wendy Troy
- Staff: Alan Williams, Jose Palmar, TBD
- Referee: Bill Walk, IR

---

**TV & WEBSITE**

- http://www.natabletennis.com
- E-mail for confirmation: info@natabletennis.com

---

**U.S. OPEN**

- Tournament T-shirt $15 each (write in quantity): SMLXLXXL
- Tournament programs

---

**SECURITY & SPECTATOR PASSES**

All persons entering the venue MUST obtain an entry pass. Players will receive a pass when they check-in individually and the team captain must check-in for their team at the registration desk. Spectators, family, and friends can either purchase a pass on this entry form for $5 per person for the entire duration of the tournament or purchase a pass on site for $10. For lost passes for all entrants, a replacement must be purchased.

---

**TOTAL FEES DUE**

- Makes checks payable to North American Table Tennis
- $50 penalty for returned checks

---

We agree to abide by all USATT and ITTF regulations. We accept full responsibility for our participation and relieve all associated parties of any liabilities resulting from injury to ourselves or damage to our property.

---

**CAPTAIN’S SIGNATURE FOR TEAM (ADULT/GUARDIAN FOR MINORS):**

---

*For each USATT member, an extra $10 will be charged for players that do not supply a membership number.*
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  - Winner Tracksuit (cotton/poly, Navy/Yellow/White, M, L, XL) Item: LSFWR

- **SHIRTS**
  - **22.95**
  - Classic Polo Shirt (100% cotton, Navy/Royal/Dark Blue, M, L, XL) Item: LSPCL
  - Match Polo Shirt (100% cotton, Yellow/Red/Royal, L, XL) Item: LSPCL

- **SWEATSHIRTS**
  - **49.95**
  - Classic Sweatshirt (100% cotton, Navy/White, M, L, XL) Item: LFSCL

- **LEATHER**
  - **49.95**
  - Leather Jacket (cotton/poly, Navy/Red/White, M, L, XL) Item: LFLSR

**TITANIUM 5.4 WRB**

For those who demand extreme speed, but won't tolerate a loss of control, STIGA TITANIUM 5.4 WRB is the perfect choice. This blade combines the speed of its Balsa core with the control features of classic upper veneers to deliver a balanced performance. The blade is available in 289, 269, and 259 grams, with fantastic results. Although carbon is a very stiff material, the elasticity of these rubbers is maintained, offering a tremendous catapult effect. The surface has STIGA's Mega Tension properties and the sponge uses STIGA's ACS technology, completing the blade's powerful and extremely light performance.

**CARBO AND CARBO SOUND**

Carbon + Titanium have revolutionized blade production for a new generation of players. New STIGA CARBO and CARBO SOUND rubbers introduce the carbon fiber technology to rubber sheets, with fantastic results. Although carbon is a very stiff material, the elasticity of these rubbers is maintained, offering a tremendous catapult effect. The sound produced when striking the ball is quite loud. The surface has STIGA's Mega Tension properties and the sponge uses STIGA's ACS technology. The CARBO and CARBO SOUND rubbers are available in 9295, 9195, and 9095 grams, with fantastic results.

**Special**

- **STIGA TITANIUM 5.4 WRB**
  - **33.95**
  - Size: 289, 269, 259
  - Price: 229 Item: SST5

- **CARBO CARBO SOUND**
  - **33.95**
  - Size: 9295, 9195, 9095
  - Price: 229 Item: SSCT
WE WILL MATCH OUR
COMPETITORS' PRICES!
Offers good thru 9/23/04
paddlepalace.com
1-800-547-5891

COMBO SPECIAL
$98.95
Item: XSIATX

COMBO SPECIAL
$98.95
Item: XSIATI

Air-Texa
Balsa and Texalium
Great for the topspin player who plays at the middle range and likes a fast blade. Thick center layer of balsa combined with two layers Texalium and two layers Japanese Abachi wood.
Speed OFF = Handle FL, ST
Wgt 85 gm Piles 3W 2TX
Blade only $78.95 Item: XSIATX

Air-Titan
Balsa and Titanium
Thick center layer of balsa with two layers of titanium and two layers of Japanese Abachi wood combine for the best weapon for the player who prefers fast/hard touch.
Speed OFF = Handle FL, ST
Wgt 88 gm Piles 3W 2T
Blade only $78.95 Item: XSIATI

999 Elite/999 Elite Ultima SPECIALS
JUIC 999 Elite: One of our hottest rubber sheets! Fantastic spin, but greater speed than other tacky rubber sheets. Keeps its original spin characteristics longer, and is lighter in weight. Medium-soft sponge.
Speed 9.5 Spin 9.6 Sponge 1.5, 1.8, 2.0, 2.5 Reg.$29.95 Item RJSE
JUIC 999 Elite SV: Same great topsheet but even softer sponge than 999 Elite.
Speed 9.0 Spin 9.6 Sponge 1.5, 2.0, 2.5 Reg.$29.95 Item RJSV

JUIC 999 Elite Defense: Great tacky spin and quality of JUIC 999 Elite, combined with super-soft control-type sponge to slow speed down to the level that defensive players love.
Speed 7.1 Spin 9.6 Sponge 1.0, 1.5, 2.0 Reg.$25.95 Item RJED

999 Elite Hard Type: Same fantastic spin/speed/lightness of 999 Elite. High-tech, harder sponge gives added power and feeling of invincible strength!
Speed 9.2 Spin 9.6 Sponge 1.5, 2.0, 2.5 Reg.$29.95 Item RJEH

JUIC 999 Elite Ultima and Ultima SV: Fantastic! High tension sponge is combined with the popular spinny and fast JUIC 999 Elite topsheet to produce this 100% MADE IN JAPAN masterpiece!
Ultima: Speed 9.6 Spin 9.6 Sponge 1.8, 2.0, 2.5 Reg.$29.95 Item RJEU
Ultima SV: Speed 9.2 Spin 9.6 Sponge 2.0, 2.5 Reg.$27.95 Item RJEU5

Hallmark Carbon
The great Hallmark aura is manifested in this outstanding wood/carbon combination with two thin layers of carbon with 3 layers wood. Fast offensive blade for out and out attacking play!
Speed OFF = Handle AN, FL, ST Wgt 95 Piles 3W/2C Price $55.95 Item SHCA

Super Special Extra
(Long Pips) Great for close to the table blocking and wider pips increase the level of control. Enormous disturbing properties.
Speed 4.2 Spin 5.4
Sponge CX 1.0, Red only
Price $44.95 Item: RHSE

Frustration
(Long Pips) Slightly sticky surface produces some rotation of ball. Add Spin Max to the pips surface and increase the rotation.
Speed 4.0 Spin 5.6
Sponge CX 1.0, 1.5, 2.0
Price $44.95 Item: RHFR

Ponther
(Med Pips) Get the tricky advantage of long pips + offensive potential of short pips all in one rubber.
Relatively wide pips.
Speed 6.9 Spin 5.9
Sponge CX 1.0, 1.5, 2.0
Price $34.95 Item: RHPA

Power Spin
(Smooth) Produces very high levels of spin. Choose 2.0mm for faster top spin, or 1.6 for control of chops.
Speed 8.4 Spin 9.0
Sponge 1.0, 1.5, 2.0
Price $34.95 Item: RHPS

NEW Rubber
SUPERBLOCK
Long Pips Item: RUSB
SCALPEL
Long Pips Item: RUSC
DOMINATION
Smooth Item: RUDO
LEOPARD
Short Pips Item: RULE
TORNADO ULTRA
Short Pips Item: RUTO
President's Report
By Sheri Soderberg Pittman

The USATT Board met in Colorado Springs on June 18-19. Since I try to share some information about the internal workings of USATT in every president's report, I will elaborate on what happens at Board meetings during this "association primer series" as well as share some of the highlights of the meeting.

The meetings, which take place twice a year, begin on Friday evenings. In the call to order, all of the attendees briefly introduce themselves. Besides Board members and staff, invited guests and visiting USATT members often attend these meetings.

The next order of business is reports. In the President's Report, I talk about recent representations on behalf of USATT and the state of our association. I was pleased to summarize the many accomplishments USATT had achieved since the last Board meeting.

During Tong Lee's Treasurer's Report, we also heard from USATT's auditor, Ken Waugh. He was very impressed by the state of USATT's finances, the internal controls put in place by Deborah Gray and the smooth transition of accounting responsibilities to Cariyn Van Der Wege. Ken presented the audit of our 2003 IRS Form 990 and stated that USATT's reserves were now at a healthy $294,000.

Jimmy McClure, USATT's veteran USOC Board member, had just concluded 21 years of service due to the USOC's internal restructuring that resulted in the dissolution of the former Board. Chris Vadala, the Sports Partnership Director who serves as USATT's primary contact with the USOC, elaborated on the expected new direction of the USOC, which is that the staff will carry on all primary USOC functions other than Audit, Compensation Review, Nominating/Governance and Ethics.

The USOC is expected to disband its former committee-level activities, such as the review processes conducted by the USOC's Membership & Credentials Committee. Chris stated that the concerns he had previously shared with us, for example, about USATT's managerial capabilities, no longer applied. Chris echoed Ken Waugh's praise for the staff's professionalism and spirit of cooperation.

Next on the agenda was the Executive Director's Report. Doru had worked very hard preparing the High Performance Plan for the next Olympic quadrennium based on our previously-submitted Strategic Plan. The Board was duly impressed by Doru's thorough grasp of all of the competitive elements contained in the plan. With the resolution of many of our association's previous challenges, USATT is poised to move aggressively ahead in support of our athletes. While there was the type of discussion that resulted in the dissolution of the former Board, Chris Vadala, the Sports Partnership Director who serves as USATT's primary contact with the USOC, elaborated on the expected new direction of the USOC, which is that the staff will carry on all primary USOC functions other than Audit, Compensation Review, Nominating/Governance and Ethics.

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The meeting closed Friday and opened Saturday in Executive Session. Executive Sessions are considered "closed-door," private Board sessions and usually are kept confidential because of proprietary or sensitive legal discussions. Under USATT's General Counsel arrangement with the Washington, DC law firm of Powers Pyles Sutter & Verville, P.C., USATT has benefited from receiving hundreds of hours of pro bono legal service.

The Board received a second report from Doru. He previewed and/or reviewed a number of the latest day-to-day details of the association—topics such as the status of our national tournaments, staffing, Olympic preparation, membership services and ratings.

Almost every committee had furnished reports and we reviewed the major points presented by each of the chairs. Board members who also chair committees are uniquely-situated to give verbal reports, so we heard from Barney Reed, Dr. Wang and Willy Lepantu about their committee's activities and initiatives.

Like all national governing bodies, USATT has an appointed technical liaison to New York City for their 2012 Olympic bid. George Brathwaite gave us a report highlighting his recent interaction with them.

USATT Election
A new USATT election is coming up. Ballots will be mailed by Sept. 15, and must be returned by Oct. 15. Results will be posted at the www.usatt.org by Oct. 20. Running for office, in alphabetical order, are:

President: Christian Lillieroos
Sheri Pittman (incumbent)
Jing Wang

Secretary: Tim Boggan (incumbent, unopposed)

Vice President
Robert Blackwell
(2 positions):
Bob Fox (incumbent)
Robert Mayer (incumbent)
Jim McQueen
Angelicus-Onasanya
Lily Yip

Don't forget to vote!!!
In our humble senior corner of table tennis, there is a vivid increase in the number of senior tournaments and Senior Olympics events which are dedicated to a celebration of life and wellness.

The USATT Senior Committee members expressed their satisfaction with the development of the Senior Program for 2004 during the committee meeting held at Laguna Woods, California, on June 4, 2004. Senior Committee members present: Olga & Stan Kahan (co-chairs), Hank McCoullum, Grant Misbach, Barney D. Reed and David Sakai. Unable to attend: Richard McAfee. Guest: Christian Lillieroos.

Senior Tournaments Held Recently

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 7</td>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>The Henderson Senior Games</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 26-28</td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Meiklejohn Quaker City Seniors</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 15-16</td>
<td>California</td>
<td>Laguna Woods Senior Games</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 3-4</td>
<td>California</td>
<td>Meiklejohn National Seniors</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 19</td>
<td>California</td>
<td>Pasadena Senior Olympic Qualifiers</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 22-23</td>
<td>California</td>
<td>Southland Senior Olympics/Anaheim</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 4</td>
<td>Utah</td>
<td>Provo Senior Games</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 6-8</td>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>Wesleyan Senior Pro-Tour &amp; Sr.Training Camp</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 29</td>
<td>California</td>
<td>Hemet Old Olympics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 2</td>
<td>California</td>
<td>San Bernardino Senior Olympics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 4-8</td>
<td>Utah</td>
<td>Huntsman World Senior Games (St. George); Director: Grant Misbach &amp; Shonie Aki</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exhibition

May Exhibition – Laguna Woods, California – A table tennis exhibition with Attitu Malek and Loc Ngo in singles, and doubles with players from the LWTTC. This event generated high interest from seniors from among the 150 spectators.

Press & Media

May-June: An article appeared in the Los Angeles Times (second largest newspaper in the U.S.). The article concerned the Laguna Woods Senior Games in the Orange County Register, a TV interview, Channel 6 and a radio interview.

Interclub Competitions

The interclub competitions have continued between six clubs in Southern California: Anaheim Senior Center, Irvine Senior Center, Laguna Woods TT Club, Phoenix Club/Anaheim, Seal Beach TT Club, Sun City TT Club.

Suggestions (From David Sakai and Stan Kahan)

- To disseminate information about TT activities among senior communities in Florida, Arizona, Northern Virginia, Washington D.C., etc., in order to establish new venues for table tennis senior games and competitions.
- To use community or public service announcements, local press and media for table tennis promotion.

The USATT Senior Committee expresses gratitude to the USATT Board for its recommendation to the USATT Tournament Committee for the approval of 5-year increments, starting from 70 years of age, and for the introduction of special life memberships after age 70.

The Best is Yet to Come!
It's Almost Time... Are You Ready?
present the

2004 USA Table Tennis
National Championships

at the

Las Vegas Convention Center
Las Vegas, Nevada
December 15-18, 2004

Lookout for the following events:

National Championship Events
- Men's Singles
- Women's Singles
- Men's Doubles
- Women's Doubles
- Mixed Doubles

Championship Age Events (U.S. Citizens Only)
- U-22 Men's Singles
- U-22 Women's Singles
- Over 30 Singles
- Senior Men's Singles 40+
- Senior Women's Singles 40+
- Esquire Men's Singles 50+
- Esquire Women's Singles 50+
- Senior Men's Esquire Singles 60+
- Senior Women's Esquire Singles 60+
- Veteran RR 70+
- Veteran RR 75+
- Veteran RR 80+
- Senior Doubles 40+
- Esquire Doubles 50+
- Senior Esquire Doubles 60+
- Veteran Doubles 70+

Hardbat Championship Events
- Hardbat
- Hardbat Doubles

USATT Rating Events
- U2400 Singles
- U2300 RR
- U2200 RR
- U2100 RR
- U2000 RR
- U2000 HARDBAT RR
- U1900 RR
- U1800 RR
- U1700 RR
- U1600 RR
- U1500 RR
- U1400 RR
- U1300 RR
- U1200 RR
- U1100 RR
- U1000 RR
- Unrated RR
- U900 Women's RR
- U800 Women's RR
- U700 Women's RR
- U600 Women's RR
- U500 Women's RR
- U400 Women's RR
- U300 Women's RR
- U200 Women's RR
- Unrated RR
- U1900 Women's RR
- U1800 Doubles
- U1700 Doubles
- U1600 Doubles
- U1500 Doubles
- U1400 Doubles
- U1300 Doubles
- U1200 Doubles

National School Championship Events
- Boys' Primary School Singles (U-13)
- Girls' Primary School Singles (U-13)
- Boys' Elementary School Singles (U-10)
- Girls' Elementary School Singles (U-10)

National Disabled Championship Events
- Men's Wheelchair Singles (Classes 1-5) RR
- Women's Wheelchair Singles (Classes 1-5) RR
- T tetra Men and Women Combined Singles (Classes 1-2) RR
- Standing Men and Women Combined Doubles (Classes 6-10) RR
- Wheelchair Men and Women Combined Doubles (Classes 1-5) SE
- Standing Men and Women Combined Doubles (Classes 6-10) SE

*Names and Events may be updated. Details can be found on the Official Entry Form. Entry Forms will be sent by mail and can be downloaded online at www.usatt.org

For More Information:
USA Table Tennis, One Olympic Plaza, Colorado Springs, CO 80909
Phone: 719.866.4583 Fax: 719.632.6071 Email: admin@usatt.org

Event Management Provided by:
North American Table Tennis
NCTTA Report
By Jack Wu, NCTTA Vice President

The National Collegiate Table Tennis Association (NCTTA) is pleased to announce the end of our successful 2003-04 season while welcoming new members to join us in the upcoming new season. This past season actually started very early, when the executives voted for the 2004 championship site. The various bids were discussed openly on the NCTTA forum (the discussion threads can still be viewed in the forum's archive) with City Beach/Stanford winning the bid. Over the next several months, NCTTA focused on obtaining its 501(c)(3) non-profit status and struck an exclusive equipment sponsorship deal with Stiga/Table Tennis Pioneers. As a result, NCTTA was in a much better position in terms of finance and marketing even before the season began.

Meets in all divisions started promptly in fall of 2003. However, there were some controversies within the New England and Ohio divisions. Questions were raised regarding whether certain players were students or, in fact, faculty members. These concerns were addressed and solutions were reached in a timely manner by the executive board. Here, NCTTA would like to reiterate its commitment to prompt table tennis on the college campus and welcome all affiliated school members to participate in NCTTA meets on the second or third teams. However, NCTTA reserves the first team positions for students since it will influence how certain club programs can transform into university-recognized varsity sports programs in the future.

Early in the fall, our recruitment director, Willy Leparulo, was also appointed as the new national director for Association of College Unions International's (ACUI) table tennis program, after Hank McCollum had stepped down from that position following many years of dedication. The appointment strengthened the ties between ACUI and NCTTA, and also opened the doors for many NCTTA executives helping to run several ACUI regional competitions.

As for NCTTA competitions, spring of 2004 brought many intense, heated battles as teams jugged for position and for an invitation to the NCTTA Championship. The most intense division race took place in the New England division where Boston University and Wesleyan University (a small liberal-arts college) defeated the traditional powerhouses in the region, including Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Northeastern University and Harvard University. Of note, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University and the University of Virginia also qualified for the NCTTA Championship.

In April, the NCTTA championship was held in conjunction with ACUI, where sixteen out of seventeen teams attended. After two days of competition, Texas Wesleyan University defeated the University of California at Los Angeles to take its first ever NCTTA National Championship title! The University of Pennsylvania finished in the third place. At this point, NCTTA would like to thank many people for their help, including Sean O'Neill, Dennis Davis, Larry Hodges, USATT and many others. NCTTA is also extremely grateful to its sponsors: Stiga/Table Tennis Pioneers and Newgy. For all questions, please address it to Willy Leparulo at recruitment@nctta.org.

UnTable Tennis from Cartoonjazz.com
Interested in table tennis club t-shirts, screen savers or wall art? See w.cartoonjazz.com or call 732-283-8700. Part of the proceeds go to USATT. See below!

ACUI Report
By Willy Leparulo, ACUI Table Tennis Director

Good News to report on the ACUI College Table Tennis front. After some initial trepidation about the program's future status; the powers that be at ACUI have decided that Table Tennis will return for the 2004-2005 Academic year. ACUI, with the help and support of USATT and Newgy Industries, promotes intercollegiate singles and doubles play throughout North America, and are looking forward to a great year. Dates for the 2005 ACUI Regional tournaments will be published in the upcoming months. The 2005 ACUI National Championship will be held in late spring, 2005 at Ft. Worth, Texas on the campus of Texas Wesleyan University along with the 2005 NCTTA Championships.

Also to report, the U.S. College National team has been selected to represent the United States in the World University Games in Gyor, Hungary, on Sept. 1-5. The team consists of Jiachen Wang of Texas Wesleyan University; John Mar of the University of Georgia; Vineet Agarwal of UCLA; William Liu of Colombia University; and Jackie Lee of Berkeley. Organization and planning for the tournament is ongoing as we attempt to procure a coach and clothing sponsorship in order to properly send our top collegiate athletes to the world games. For further information on ACUI Table Tennis or the World University Games, please contact Willy Leparulo at recruitment@acui.org.
**Tournament Information**

**PLAYING SITE:**
Lincoln Center Fieldhouse
2450 Lincoln Street, Highland, Indiana 46322

For directions, visit www.highlandparks.org

**Tournament Director:** Phil Schmucker

**Tournament Referee:** Chris Williams

**Tournament Committee**
Brad Balmer
Jason Denman
Jerry Goeller
Jim Lynch

**Eligibility**
Highland Open is open to USATT members or those who join.
All age event cutoffs will be 10/16/04.
Open Singles Semi and Final will be on Sunday.

**NOTES:**
1) Tournament management may modify, combine, or cancel events, limit entries and assign temporary rating for unrated players.
2) Draws WITHIN a round robin may be modified to avoid state/club duplication, but no modifications will be made BETWEEN round robin entries.
3) All USATT rules will be enforced.
4) Events starting after 4pm on Saturday MAY carryover final rounds to Sunday.
5) Entry Limitations - PLEASE DO NOT enter 2 rated events with same starting time or more than 6 total events.
6) Unrated players may enter any event (except rated doubles). HOWEVER, they will not advance from their Round Robin!
7) All events will be 3 out of 5 games except Open Singles, Open Women's, and Open Doubles, which will be 4 out of 7.
8) Ratings will be from the Sept/Oct issue of USA Table Tennis Magazine.
9) Any questions regarding the tournament, eligibility, or entry should be directed to Dan Seemiller at (574) 654-7478 between 6pm and 9:30pm EST.

For more information, visit www.highlandparks.org

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**Highland Open Entry**

**Mail entry to:**
Dan Seemiller
P.O. Box 608
New Carlisle, Indiana 46552

**Event Fees**

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<th>#</th>
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<th>Fee</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<th>2nd</th>
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<td>Open-Doubles</td>
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**Circle events entered:**

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**Event Fees**

- Registration Fee: $2.00
- Rating Fee: $4.00
- USATT Membership Fee (Player pass $10/Adult - 1 year $40/Junior - 1 year $20)
- T-Shirts $13 (circle size) S M L XL
- Juniors Team Donation

**Total Enclosed**

**Checks payable to:** Highland Open

**Deadlines:**
- Deposit by 10/1/04
- Mail entry by 10/5/04
- Play by 10/24/04

Please enter me in the circled events. I agree to comply with all USATT regulations. I accept full responsibility for my participation and relieve the Lincoln Center Fieldhouse, sponsors, and the USATT of any liability resulting from injury to myself or damage to my property.

**Signature:**

(Adults - please sign your entry form)
(Minors - Parents, please sign their entry form)

**Deadline:**
- Tuesday, October 5, 2004

---

**Trump Hotel and Casino**

One Buffington Harbor Drive, Gary, Indiana 46406
1-888-21-TRUMP ~ $60 per night (includes breakfast)

To get this rate, you must tell the hotel that your rooms are for Highland Open!
Interview With ITTF President
Adham Sharara On Gluing
Courtesy of Tamasu Co. Ltd (Butterfly)/Kenzo Yamamatsu,
Chief Editor of The Table Tennis Report (Butterfly) and the ITTF • June 27, 2004

ITTF has decided to ban all table tennis glues that contain toxic materials on Sept. 1, 2007. Please indicate how this decision was reached and what the objectives of this decision are. Why is September 1, 2007 the date to start this ban? There were many trials to ban the glues in the past.

A proposal was made by Mr. Kimura of Japan as a member of the ITTF Board of Directors to not allow gluing in the playing venue as of 1 September 2005 and to ban the use of toxic glue as of 1 September 2006. However, after many discussions and several explanations by members of the Board it was decided to accept the proposal from Mr. Kimura but to delay the implementation to 1 September 2006 for gluing outside the hall, and 1 September 2007 for the total ban. In the meantime, it was decided to form a Working Group to study this proposal and the method to implement the new rule. The Working Group is chaired by Mr. George Segun (ITTF Vice President) and the members are Mr. Odd Gustavsen, Dr. Rafford Harrison and Dr. Jean Francois Kahn, plus we will invite some experts to be part of this working group who will report for the first time in Shanghai.

The ITTF homepage said, before March 12, 2004, that the glues containing organic solvents should be banned. However, this description was changed on March 13, 2004, to the glues containing toxic materials. Was there any intention behind this new expression?

No, there was no specific intention. The actual objective is to ban glues containing any toxic material. The solvents generate most of these toxic materials. But to make it clear, the intent is to use glues that do not have any toxic materials and to protect the health of our athletes.

The ITTF announcement on their website of March 13, 2004 is so far the last official information relating to the banning of glues containing the toxic materials. Is there any new movement or decision on this subject after that date?

No, not yet. The Working Group has not met yet. They will meet for the first time in Barcelona this summer at “C.A.R.” the Sports Research centre in Barcelona (recognized by the IOC).

ITTF has set up a working group to research the glues. What kind of research will its members be making?

They will meet to determine how to implement the new rules as passed by the ITTF Board of Directors. Their job is to recommend to the Board in Shanghai exactly what to do. What procedures to follow, what elements to be examined, etc. Their first work will be to meet with specialists at the Research Centre in Barcelona.

In case the working group would conclude that the toxic materials, which are contained in the presently approved glues, do not harm prominently the human body, do you think that such currently approved glues can be used further on?

We do not know. We must first wait and see what they will recommend. We must give them sufficient time to study the matter carefully without any outside influence.

Do you intend to ban all currently approved glues, regardless of what conclusions the working group reaches? Or, under which circumstances could the currently approved glues be used after September 1, 2007?

Again, I do not know. This decision would be made based on the results, recommendations and conclusions of the working group.

What are the standards of the table tennis glues that ITTF would accept?

This decision would be made by the experts that will consult in this matter based on the frequency of use and the conditions regarding table tennis players and table tennis halls.

If all glues are banned on Sept. 1, 2007, how could the rubber be put on the blades? Do you have any substitutes in sight?

This is also part of the research to be done. I have heard that very soon there will be on the market some type of water-based glue free of any toxic materials that has the same characteristics of the current glues. We must just wait and see. This work will take AT LEAST one or two years to be concluded.

Do you have any blue prints on how the rackets should be controlled after September 1, 2007? How should the approved glues be controlled by the ITTF in the future?

It would be using a similar method as we do now, unless the Research centre will propose a new method. Again, we must just wait and see. There is no need to speculate before the work of the Working group has even started.

They Said It:..."It’s difficult to find words." - Jorgen Persson at the USA Pro Tour, after blow- ing a series of big leads against Korea's Yoontae. "He should have won 7-0!" said USA Men's Coach Dan Seemiller. Persson won the first three games, then lost four in a row. In the fourth game he led 7-3; in the fifth, 7-2; in the sixth 10-5; in the seventh 7-3 and 9-7!

"If you think about your ratings, you will never, ever play up there." (He points to main arena.) USA National Men's Coach Dan Seemiller at the coaching seminar at the U.S. Open.

"Once you understand table tennis, you understand table tennis." - Zoran Kalinich, Yugoslavian Men's Coach and 1983 World Men's Doubles Champion (with Dragutin Surbev), at the USA ITTF Pro Tour, on whether he faces any problems coaching shakehanders, since he was a 6'5" penholder.

Listen to a Ping-Pong Game
The following is from a chapter in the book, Trump: How to Get Rich, by Donald Trump. In it, Trump spoke with a woman from Hong Kong who worked very successfully on Wall Street. She likened knowing and predicting global markets to listening to a Ping-Pong game. Contributed by Royce Wong.

"When I was growing up, we had a Ping-Pong table in the den, and I could hear the games my brothers would play, sometimes for hours, when I was studying in my room. I discovered that I could listen and discern the tilt of the paddle, and the outcome of the volley, just by the sound of the Ping-Pong ball being hit, and the sound of it landing on the other side of the net. I knew the results, the repercussions, and the recovery that would be required to successfully handle what had been dealt. Later, I applied this to my work in emerging markets and I could often predict what would be happening just by concentrating on world events and thinking of the sound of Ping-Pong balls being hit around the globe. Ping-Pong is really the reason behind my success."

2003 Killerspin Extreme Table Tennis Championships
"Features balls filled with volatile hydrogen, scalding hot paddles, distempered gnomes roaming the tables, and a rule stating that the first player to hit his ball into the net must immediately renounce his religion. Stay tuned afterward for Full-Contract Drama Construction and Hardcore Spanish Verb Conjugation." - From The Washington Post, July 19, 2004, section D2 (sports), in a listing of "events" that week.
Maryland Table Tennis Center
18761-Q Frederick Rd., Gaithersburg, MD 20879 • (301) 519-8580 • www.mdttc.com

All Levels Welcome!

Christmas Camp Dates:
December 26-31

Daily Schedule
Dec. 26 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM
Dec. 27 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Dec. 28 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Dec. 29 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Dec. 30 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Dec. 31 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM

FEE
• $220 (MDTTC members: $190)
• Minimum deposit: $50
• Make checks out to MDTTC
• Enter Early! Only first 24 players are guaranteed spots!

Housing
• Holiday Inn, 301-948-8900
One mile away, at the intersection of Frederick Rd. and Montgomery Village Ave.
• Free HBO, CNN, ESPN, coffee

*MENTION "TABLE TENNIS" FOR BEST RATE.*

Camps are primarily junior camps, but adults are welcome as well.

Butterfly 40mm Training Balls are the Official Ball of the Maryland Table Tennis Center

Name: Phone: Age/DOB: Rating:

Address: Amount Enclosed: $
Vote for Experience, Continuity and Stability

Dear Members,

In a few weeks, you will have the opportunity to pick USATT’s president for the next four years. As a result of my past promise to return the vote to you, YOU get to decide the outcome of this election; you get to decide which of the three paths USATT will take.

Your choice will have a significant impact on executive staffing decisions, financial priorities and the general direction of our association. If you choose me, you know who will serve as USATT’s executive director. You know that USATT will continue to be fiscally responsible, and increase income and reserves through better marketing and more sponsorships. You know that USATT will have the financial capability to continue to improve its membership services and core grassroots programs. Or you can choose to change direction and opt for new leadership along with all the complications and controversies that entails.

I am running for re-election based on my accomplishments and track record. My supporters—see some of the many who are working to re-elect me—want to continue letting me build on the solid foundation established during my presidency. They depend on my years of experience. They rely on my proven track record. They want to preserve what’s been accomplished. A vote for me ensures continuity, stability and a fresh agenda that’s more of the same and better. Please visit my website, below, to learn more!

Sincerely,
Sheri Pittman

Highlights During My Presidency

- Returning the Vote to Members: In 1997, you lost your right to vote directly for the president. In 2001, my administration restored that right.
- Finding a Long-Term and Capable Executive Director: The hiring of Doru Gheorghe netted us an additional bonus—terminating the Oakbrook Training Center contract, which saved USATT a substantial sum of money. Now that we have a highly-respected and talented ED who works in unison with the Board, dedicated staff and volunteers to execute policies and plans, let’s vote to keep him!
- Processing Ratings Promptly: Remember when ratings were constantly behind schedule? Thanks, NATT!
- Strengthening USATT’s Financial Position: USATT boasts its best historical financial position, with almost $300,000 accumulated in reserves.
- Improving Communication to Members: We’ve made communication to membership a top priority through a first-class magazine, revamped website and new USATT forum.
- Running Efficient and Profitable US Opens and Nationals: Credit USATT’s outsourcing of duties, sponsors, staff and volunteers.
- Securing Sponsorships: Sponsorship revenues have steadily improved, including Killerspin’s title sponsorship of the 2004 US Open.
- Establishing a USATT League: USATT has created a national league, sponsored by Paddle Palace and Stiga, making table tennis available to the masses, potentially igniting explosive membership growth.
- Creating a Community Olympic Development Program: I was able to create this opportunity for USATT while staying within USATT’s strict conflict-of-interest rules. This USOC-approved program includes affiliations with local communities, schools, a health club, Florida Atlantic University, Boys/Girls Clubs and a church.
- Improving Collegiate Relations: I appointed Willy Leparulo to serve on the Board to represent the college community better. USATT has reduced collegiate membership fees.
- Supporting Elite Athlete Development: USATT has filed a general Strategic Plan and a 4-year comprehensive High Performance Plan for the next quadrennium with the USOC that overhauls all past plans. USATT has consistently emphasized youth development—ranging from a tour of China in 2000 to Butterfly-sponsored Dojo training opportunities to the recent creation of junior and cadet teams, with funded coaches.

Sheri Pittman, Incumbent Candidate for President
Residence: Delray Beach, Florida
Professional Experience
• Community Olympic Development Program Manager, Palm Beach County
• Lawyer/Lobbyist in MN
• Peace Corps Volunteer, Gabon, Africa
Education
• JD, Georgetown University Law Center, Washington, DC (1991)
• BA, Santa Clara University, CA (1983)
Table Tennis Experience
• USATT President (since 1999)
• ITTF Executive Board Member/North American Continental Vice President
• USATT Board Member (1993-1996, didn’t seek re-election, 1998-present)
• Author of numerous USATT magazine features
• US Women’s Team Leader, 1994 World Team Cup in France
• USATT Member, local & national volunteer, for 30+ years

SHERI PITTMAN
www.sheripittman.com

USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE • Sept/Oct 2004

24
**Vote for Sheri Pittman for President and...**

**...Support My Priorities**

- **Establish a Marketing Division:** USATT will increase its marketing efforts in order to fund more and better programs. A marketing division ensures better analysis of USATT's properties, strategic development of their revenue-generating potential, better identification of sponsors, including those from outside table tennis, and improved sponsorship fulfillment.

- **Support Clubs through Financial Incentives:** The engine for growth and for retention of members is not television, but clubs. Clubs are the infrastructure of USATT. I will create financial incentives for clubs. The partnership would also include support on how to run clubs profitably, organize USATT Leagues and train coaches. I want to form new clubs in YMCAs, Boys/Girls Clubs, sports clubs and schools, as I did in the CODP.

- **Form State Associations:** It is not possible for USATT staff to provide all services required at the local level. Formation of state associations with USATT oversight and support is the solution. Key USATT staff will then be able to interact with and service club growth.

- **Meet or Exceed 2005-2008 High Performance Plan Goals:** USATT's plan, strongly supported by athletes and filed with the USOC includes athlete and coach performance incentives, a revamped coaching certification system with more coaching seminars, domestic and international coaching camps, increased international competitions, elite colleague support and women's initiatives.

- **Expand the USATT League:** To generate more interest and participation in the USATT League, I want to expand it into the inter-club and inter-state levels. Eventually, I foresee a National League Championship and professional league structure.

- **Revive and Internationalize the US Open Team Championships:** Beginning in 2005, this will create an annual additional revenue source, attract more international players and give members another national tournament.

- **Create More Community Olympic Development Programs:** I did it once, and, based on that experience, I am uniquely positioned to again spearhead this effort.

- **Pursue an NCAA Recognition Strategy and Increase Collegiate Funding:** I initiated an NCAA recognition strategy by forming a Collegiate NCAA Committee. I want to continue to work with the collegiate reps on the Board to enact and financially support NCTTA proposals.

- **Open Regional Training Centers:** We now have funding for them. A designated committee will soon be posting selection criteria.

- **Include Table Tennis in a USOC Multi-Sport Event:** The USOC is organizing a series of multi-sport events. I will pursue the inclusion of table tennis in a promotional event celebrating Beijing's hosting of the 2008 Olympics. This will provide invaluable exposure for USATT and competition opportunities for our athletes while costing us little or nothing.

- **Increase competitive opportunities by utilizing international contacts** - The many international relationships I have cultivated over the past five years will continue to translate into numerous unique opportunities for our developing elite athletes.

---

**...Join My Supporters**

- Todd Sweeres, MD, 1996 & 2000 Olympian, Elite Athlete Rep on USATT Board of Directors
- Tawny Banh, CA, 2000 & 2004 Olympian, Elite Athlete Rep on USATT Board of Directors
- Khoa Nguyen, CA, 2000 & 2004 Olympian, former USATT Board Member
- Jasna Reed, MI, 2000 & 2004 Olympian, 2003 Women's National Champ
- Mark Hazinski, IN, 2004 Olympian
- Whitney Ping, OR, 2004 Olympian
- Dan Seemiller, IN, Men's National and Olympic Coach, Former US Champion, Hall of Famer, Former USATT President
- Tim Boggan, NY, USATT Secretary, Hall of Famer, former USATT President
- Bob Fox, MN, Member, USATT Board of Directors, 1992, 1996, 2000 Olympic Team Leader
- Tong Lee, CA, Treasurer and Member, USATT Board of Directors
- George Brathwaite, NY, Member, USATT Board of Directors
- Masaaki Tajima, CA, National Coach, 2004 US Junior Girls National Team Coach
- Zhang Ping, FL, 2004 US Cadet National Team Coach, Community Olympic Development Program Coach
- Homer Brown, AL, Founder of Bumbernets - a retail table tennis company
- Greg Miller, MN, USATT coach
- Yao Xi "Crystal" Huang, CA, Olympic practice partner of USA Olympian Tawny Banh
- Dave Sakai, MD, Senior Competitor
- Donna Sakai, MD, Hall of Famer
- Houshang Bozorgzadeh, IA, Former US Team Leader, Hall of Famer
- Jerry Glantz, FL, Palm Beach County CODP Table Tennis Co-Chair
- Pax Tolosi, FL, player
- Simon Jacobson, FL, player
- Duke Stogner, AL, USATT Regional Umpire
- Jamey Hall, AR, Table tennis club director
- Bob Allshouse, MI, Former Organizer of the US Open Team Championships
- Nelson Gore, MA, USATT Donor
- Tang Gao Lin, CA, Coach
- Jane Ng, AL, Promoter and Coach
- Lloyd McQueen, CA, Former Tournament Director of Gilbert Cup
- Sheila O'Dougherty, MN, Former USATT Treasurer, Former National Team Member
- Beata Wronska, FL, 2004 ACUI Women's Doubles & Mixed Doubles Finalist
- Richard Ciz, FL, 2004 ACUI Men's Doubles Champion
Dear U.S.A. Table Tennis Members:

I am writing to request your support for my candidacy as President of the U.S.A. Table Tennis. I love Table Tennis, and I am devoted to our Association. Therefore, I would like very much to have the chance to serve you, and all of our Association members, as we move U.S.A. Table Tennis to the forefront of the Global Table Tennis community. Indeed, I am prepared to devote myself full-time to this important work! Following is a brief summary of my background:

Table Tennis Experience:
- Intercollegiate Champion (Taiwan; 1967)
- Winner of National Single and Doubles Tournaments (Taiwan; 1966 to 1970)
- Became a US citizen in 1982
- Co-founder of Southern California Table Tennis Association
- Founder and President of the San Gabriel Table Tennis Club
- Tournament Organizer, California International Table Tennis Championships (Alhambra, California; 1984–1992)
- Tournament Organizer/Fund Raiser, U.S Open (Anaheim, California; 1994 and 1995)
- USATT Executive Vice President (1995–Present)

Professional and Educational Experience:
- Physician; Medical General Practitioner (1979–Present)
- MBA program at the University of La Verne, California
- Chairman, Summit Business Products (current)
- Chairman, Professional Nutritional Center (current)
- Founder, Health and Life Foundation (a tax-exempt charity and educational organization approved by IRS)
- General Manager of NATV Satellite TV Station

In addition, I would like to share with you my vision:
- I would like to see our sport, Table Tennis, grow in popularity in the United States over the next ten-year period to rival the sports of tennis and basketball.
- I would like for us to be able to produce, and send to national and world tournaments, several world-class players every year, as well as to produce teams capable of medaling in the Olympics in the near future.

I believe that we can accomplish this vision by being fiscally responsible, by acting strategically, by prioritizing our current programs and activities, and by allocating our resources to fully support USATT program priorities. I would also like to:
- Support no annual increases during my term for any fees such as membership fees, rating fees, or club fees;
- Audit and evaluate USATT programs every year;
- Strengthen the inter-club communication and club services;
- Create a Club Representative seat on the Board;
- Markedly enhance external sponsorship and fundraising activity.
- Improve our Association's rapport with international Table Tennis communities;
- Maintain a highly-collaborative, and collegial community

I hope the above the information will be helpful to you, and I would welcome your support. Please call me at 626-512-3791 or e-mail me at jiingwang@hotmail.com, if you have any questions.

Sincerely yours,

Jiing Wang, M.D.
Candidate for USATT President, 2004
It saddens me to see our sport struggling. We have not capitalized on the goodwill of our members; we have not grown our clubs and tournaments and we have not been able to garner funding from sponsors at all levels of our organization.

Yet the potential for making USATT a powerhouse, in the nation and in the world, exists: what we need is "leadership," and I am prepared to make us strong!

As President, I pledge to use my own resources to represent you as President. I will not spend thousands of dollars on my personal travel from USATT funding. The USATT funds saved from this commitment will be rolled back solely to support the growth of our organization.

Table Tennis must become professional: I will increase prize money at our US Nationals and also mount a campaign for new corporate funding so that all prize money soars!

As a U.S. citizen, I am also dismayed by the current lack of presence and preeminence, at both North American and global tournaments, by U.S.A. players. We MUST begin with our youth, and actively engage our membership, to produce world-class female and male players. We also MUST have yearly ongoing training camps for all level of athletes.

As your President, we CAN do all of the above. As your President, we will NOT leave ANYONE behind: from young boys and girls who are just picking up their paddles for the first time, to senior players who have devoted their lives to our sport: we are ONE community, and I, as your President, intend to represent ALL!

WITH YOUR SUPPORT WE CAN BE SUCCESSFUL.
IT'S TIME TO CHANGE LEADERSHIP.
IT'S TIME TO WORK TOGETHER.
PLEASE VOTE FOR ME AS YOUR PRESIDENT!
Letters

Here’s a letter to Scott Preiss which we thought to print here. We’ll reprint it when Casey makes the USA Team in a few years!

Dear Mr. Preiss,

I don’t know if you will remember Casey. He hung around you all day at the Arnold Fencing Classic this year and you took his picture with Roger from Newgy. You had suggested he take some lessons; well, we hooked him up with Ray Mack in Rochester, New York and guess what—Casey is obsessed with table tennis. He looks forward to his hour-long lesson, picks up the skills quickly and is focused. Not bad for a nine year old. Especially since the club is nearly an hour from the house. He just joined the USATT and a Fall league, and we got his Stiga Eurotech Table set up last night. Coach got him new rubber on the paddle you gave him at the Arnold, and he is constantly bouncing that orange ball—better than practicing trumpet, but not much! We would like to look into the robot that you were demonstrating; could you please send us info on the one you had at the Expo? Also, if you are going to be within a couple hours of Rochester for an exhibition, we would like to know so that we can get Casey out to see you again. Thank you for inspiring him.

Thanks again, hope you will be in our area sometime soon. Maybe you could visit the club! Have a great day!

Mary Beth MacClaren, Holley, New York

Dear Editor,

Whatever else is written by the official reviewer of Tim Boggan’s leviathan Volume III (1952-62) of his projected multi-volume History of U.S. Table Tennis, let me add that the decade described in this book witnessed the seminal change from the classic to the modern game. Like it or not, sponge was here to stay. And most world class players—and Americans too, including this one—ripped the Leyland pimpled rubber off their bats for a dramatic facelift of C4 D13, Tempest or some other esoteric, cellular covering that would soon make names like Tamasit, Yasksa and Stiga household words among table tennis aficionados, and the owners of these companies rich.

Serious players and students of the game should welcome and praise this definitive history of our sport by adding it to their library before it becomes a collector’s item available—like Marty Reisman’s The Money Player—only from the tombs of Amazon.com, Xlibris, Powell’s or The Strand.

Buy this book now—while you can!

Dick Evans, Hillsboro, WV

Editor’s Note—for more info on this book and how to order it, see www.usatt.org/magazine/04july-aug/usatt_history3.pdf, or email Tim Boggan at timboggan@aol.com.

Dear Editor,

I thoroughly enjoyed Tim Boggan’s article juxtaposing Marty Reisman with the mythical Don Quixote. What an appropriate and imaginative parallel. There is actually a collective Sancho Panzianesque following that Marty has: we, the rabid, unquenchable friends and fans who have followed his career, vicariously sharing his hubris and daring. If Cervantes were alive today and was a member of USATT, and had not yet penned Don Quixote, Marty Reisman may well have been an inspiration for his masterpiece.

Sincerely and Gratefully,

Haig Raky, Cranston, RI

TIP OF THE MONTH: September

When All Else Fails

By Carl Danner

Here’s one shot that can keep you in the match against almost anyone. It’s a sharp, short, low push with lots of chop. By pushing this way repeatedly, without any ambitions of attacking or changing your shot, you can slow down the points and buy some time to think (or maybe time for your opponent’s hot streak to cool down).

The down side is that while using this tactic, your attack will also be dead in the water unless your opponent is kind enough to offer some loose returns (which could happen). But at least you won’t get munched for a little while.

TIP OF THE MONTH: October

Control the Attacking Angles

By Carl Danner

Imagine a triangle formed by two lines on a table, each starting from the middle of one side and going off to the two corners of the other side. This diagram is the key to forehand attacking angles.

Ideally, you want to position your forehand at the point of the triangle in the middle of the table on your side, and direct your attack to the two corners on your opponent’s side. When you succeed at this, you force your opponent to move widely to make returns he will instinctively aim back towards the center—and your forehand, again. Try some simple plays like this the next time you practice. Play forehand serves from your middle to either corner. The dou n side is that while using this tactic, your attack will

2004 USA National Teams

The Numbers are World Ranking

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Christian Lillieroos
for USATT President

For more information about Christian and his ideas to change, grow, and improve table tennis in the United States, visit our website at: www.ustt.org

Your vote is extremely important!

As you may already know, Christian's leadership style is very “inclusive”. He believes in people working together, teamwork, and mass participation to reach well-defined, far-reaching goals. Everyone who desires to help grow table tennis in the USA will be welcome to play an important role when Christian is President of the USATT.

The first step in that process of teamwork is for USATT members to cast their ballots. The more members who vote, the higher the probability will be that Christian will be able to accomplish his dream of making “table tennis a respectable sport in the eyes of mainstream America.”

The first step is up to you, the membership of the USATT. Please take the time to send your ballot. Your vote is extremely important.

"To possibly serve as President of USA Table Tennis is very exciting. We need to work together to make Table Tennis in the USA a respectable sport in the eyes of mainstream America, as it is in the rest of the world.

One person could never do this alone. The people who are involved with table tennis in the USA have to come together and work as a team.

It’s time for NEW LEADERSHIP involving the great minds of Table Tennis in our country today."

Christian has the knowledge, experience, and desire to take USA Table Tennis to an entirely new level. Check it out for yourself at: www.ustt.org click on “Resume” and “Background”

We can raise the awareness of table tennis in mainstream America by creating excitement through sport partnerships and marketing strategies.

—Christian Lillieroos

Christian has the backing of many influential members of the table tennis community. Please join with them and VOTE for the NEW LEADERSHIP that the sport so desperately needs.

VOTE for Christian Lillieroos
USATT President 2004
Essentially all top players with great technique were at one time top juniors with great technique. A classic case is Don Alto, age 11, from the San Diego Club in California. Coached by his dad, Raul, and rated 1846, Don has excellent forehand loop technique for anyone of any age. The sequence shown of Don looping against backspin was taken by Gerry Chua at the San Diego Open in October of 2003.

The loop is an extreme topspin shot. The topspin pulls the ball down, makes it jump after it hits the table, and the spin makes it difficult to return effectively. It allows a player to attack even a low ball with both speed and spin. At the advanced/intermediate levels, the loop is the most important stroke in table tennis. Most strategy revolves around either setting up the loop, or stopping the opponent’s loop.

**Photo 1:** Don is balanced, eyes on ball, shoulders turned, right shoulder down, weight back, free hand up for balance. He’s all set to launch full force onto the ball – from the legs, waist, shoulders and arm.

**Photo 2:** He’s begun shifting his weight from the right leg to the left, pushing off with the right. He is rotating in a circle, with the legs, waist and shoulders all adding to the rotation or torque. Both shoulders are rotating equally, with the left shoulder pulling back and down as the right shoulder drives forward and up. His racket and wrist are down. His arm is fully extended. Despite the rotation, he is balanced with weight centered. He’s about to contact the ball with a grazing motion. The more he grazes the ball, the more topspin; the more he sinks it into the sponge, the more speed.

**Photos 3-4:** Don completes the circuit, with his shoulders almost exactly 180 degrees rotated. His arm has pulled through the ball at the elbow, adding to the power. Most of his weight is now on his left leg from his weight rotation. Despite the force of the swing, he is still balanced, weight centered throughout the swing. This balance not only allows him to control the force of the swing, but it allows him to get back into position rapidly for the following shot.

**Commentary:** Probably the most important thing to see in the sequence here is the balance. This balance is achieved by keeping the weight centered throughout the stroke. Imagine a rod stuck in the top of a player’s head. The body should almost rotate around the rod, as Don does here – in photos 2-4, his head barely moves. His free arm is also up throughout the stroke, as a counter-balance to his playing arm.

In Photo 2, Don’s arm is fully extended. Shorter players should maximize this arm extension. Taller players with longer arms should bend the arm somewhat for most loops, since otherwise it would be a very long, cumbersome stroke. For example, a very tall player such as Vladimir Samsonov (world #6, former world #1) loops with his arm more bent. A shorter player such as Ma Lin (world #2, former world #1) loops with his arm much straighter.

Don’s wrist and racket are slightly down in photo 2. This will allow some extra “whip” as his wrist naturally goes through the ball. As players get more advanced, they can use more and more wrist on their loops, especially against backspin.

In Photo 3, Don follows through high over his head. Again, the height of the player makes a difference. A shorter player has a higher follow-through than a tall player. The follow-through is also higher against heavy backspin, when looping slow but with heavy topspin, or when from further off the table.

When developing a stroke from a photo sequence and article such as this, it’s best not to dwell on all the specifics of the stroke. It’s better to imitate from the photos, and use the text as checkpoints to see if you are doing it correctly, and to understand the stroke. Once you feel you are doing it correctly, you should remember the feel of the stroke, since it should all come together naturally. If it does, then note where the ball is smacking the table in photo 4 – that could be YOUR shot. If it doesn’t – time to check the photos and text again!

**Editor’s Note:** Wei Wang and Diego Schaaf are currently in China. Their regular coaching article & photo sequence will continue next issue.
Dear Friends,

I have elected to run for Vice President of the USATT Board, because I believe in the potential of Table Tennis and USATT.

I believe that Table Tennis has tremendous potential if properly marketed, I have dedicated much of the last 3 years of my life to the promotion of the sport.

Given the honor of being elected to the USATT board you can count on five things from me. I will:

1. Work hard and always act in the best interest of the sport and the USATT
2. Focus my energies where I have experience and expertise
3. Create an environment where the USATT will be a trusted partner
4. Listen and be accessible to those who care about our sport
5. Always act ethically and professionally

Together we have accomplished some great things.
Established Table Tennis as a spectator sport in a large market (5,000 Spectators)
Created a real partnership with a large government entity
Established an American Table Tennis event as one of the World’s premier events

I believe we can accomplish more. My specific goals will be:

1. Attract Major Sponsors and Partners
2. Increase Membership and Participation
3. Improve the marketing of Table Tennis
4. Improve the presentation of Table Tennis Events
5. Work to replicate models used in other successful sports

Thank you for your consideration and support

Robert Blackwell, Jr.
President
Killerspin
Board Members Present June 18 11: Sheri Pittman (SP), Jing Wang (JW), Tong Lee (TL), Tim Boggan (TB), Barney D. Reed (BR), Robert Mayer (RM), Bob Fox (BF), Jimmy McClure (JM), Willy Leparulo (WL), Todd Sweeris (TS), Eric Owens (EO), Gin W. and Whitney Ping.

Proposed by: JM; seconded by BR.

Passed: 11-0-0.

MOTION 2: Move that the Board endorse their High Performance Plan.

Proposed by: BF; seconded by TS.

Passed: 10-0-1 (JM abstained).

MOTION 3: For the implementation of bonuses for individual outstanding performance by a U.S. athlete at the Olympic Games, World Championships, and World Junior Championships, and with the proviso that any 2004 Olympic medal winner also gets his/her stated bonus.

Proposed by: JM; seconded by BR.

Passed: 11-0-1 (RM abstained).

MOTION 4: Move that the USATT establish a three-year term beginning December 2001 and ending June 2004 for the implementation of bonuses for individual outstanding performance by a U.S. athlete at the Olympic Games, World Championships, and World Junior Championships, and with the proviso that any 2004 Olympic medal winner also gets his/her stated bonus.

Proposed by: TB; seconded by BF.

Passed: 12-0-0.

MOTION 5: Move that the Board set the date of June 1, 2005 for the implementation of bonuses for individual outstanding performance by a U.S. athlete at the Olympic Games, World Championships, and World Junior Championships, and with the proviso that any 2004 Olympic medal winner also gets his/her stated bonus.

Proposed by: JM; seconded by BR.

Passed: 11-0-0.

MOTION 6: Move to the Board endorse their High Performance Plan.

Proposed by: BF; seconded by TS.

Passed: 10-0-1 (MB abstained).

MOTION 7: Move a change in the Chapter XV, Section 5 Bylaw.

Proposed by: TB; seconded by BR.

Passed: 12-0-0.

MOTION 8: Move that the Board set the date of June 1, 2005 for the implementation of bonuses for individual outstanding performance by a U.S. athlete at the Olympic Games, World Championships, and World Junior Championships, and with the proviso that any 2004 Olympic medal winner also gets his/her stated bonus.

Proposed by: TM; seconded by BR.

Passed: 11-0-1 (RM abstained).

MOTION 9: Move the following package of Bylaw proposals regarding athlete representation on committees.

Clariﬁcation regarding Chapter 11-1-K:
K. “Designated Committee” means Nominating/Elections Committee, Budget Committee, Elite Athlete Committee, Training Center Committee, Ethics and Disciplinary Committee, Grievance Panel, and any other committees which prepare, approve or implement programs in the following areas:
1. Expenditures of funds allocated to USATT by USOC and
2. Selection of international, Olympic, Pan American Colleges Team members including athletes, coaches, administrators and sports staff.

Proposed by: TB; seconded by RM.

Not Passed: 0-12-0.

MOTION 10: Regarding Section 5 in Chapter VIII—Board of Directors: Move that the two USATT representatives be elected not to exceed two-year terms but four-year terms.

Proposed by: TB; seconded by RM.

Passed: 12-0-0.

MOTION 11: Move: “That the Rules/Officials Committee establish procedures for re-certifying umpires periodically.”

Proposed by: BF; seconded by TB.

Passed: 12-0-0.

MOTION 12: Move that the referee qualiﬁcations established by the Rules/Officials Committee be approved and that all tournaments must have a qualiﬁed referee not later than January 2005.

Proposed by: RM; seconded by TB.

Not Passed: 0-12-0.

MOTION 13: Move that the Rules/Officials Committee establish procedures for foreign international umpires to transfer to USATT as IUs. Such procedures must ensure that the umpire is proﬁcient in the English language.

Proposed by: EO; seconded by BF.

Passed: 12-0-0.

MOTION 14: Move that the members of the Elite Athlete Committee are: Bob Fox (Co-Chair), Todd Sweeris (Co-Chair and National Athlete Rep), Emilia Gheorghe, David Zhuang, Tawny Banh, National Athlete Rep), Eric Owens (Olympic Athlete Rep) and Whitney Ping.

Proposed by: TB; seconded by EO.

Passed: 12-0-0.
MOTION 15: Move that President Sheri Pittman has already served two full terms and is not eligible to run again. (Sheri Pittman has left the room.)

Proposed by: JW; seconded by BR.
Not Passed: 2-7-2.
Opposed: TL, TB, GB, BF, RM, WL, TS.
In Favor: JW, BR.
Abstained: JM, EO.

MOTION 16: Move that each 2004 Election candidate endorsed by the Nominating/Elections Committee be approved by at least one member of the Board—that these be taken up one at a time and voted on.

Proposed by: TB; seconded by TS.
Passed (in the case of each candidate without dissent): 12-0-0.
The vote is subject to change if the USOC rule requires every candidate to be a U.S. citizen and any candidate is not.

MOTION 17: That Jiing Wang be approved by the Board to run in 2004 for the office of President.

Proposed by: TB; seconded by BR.
Passed: 10-0-2 (TS, EO abstained).

MOTION 18: That Lily Yip be approved by the Board to run in 2004 for the office of Vice-President.

Proposed by: GB; seconded by TB.
Passed: 12-0-0.

MOTION 19: Move to allow the Executive Director in consultation with the Treasurer to set the commission rate for fund-raisers and contractors. (This motion would rescind the earlier limit of 20% on commissions.)

Proposed by: BF; seconded by TS.
Passed: 12-0-0.

MOTION 20: Move that various USATT Committees be approved by the Board. (Each was taken up in turn.)

Passed: All such committees were approved by all in the room, unanimously in every case, except that TS registered a dissent in the case of the Tournament Committee. Note. The Training Center Committee was not up for consideration.

Submitted by Secretary Tim Boggin
June 24, 2004

MINUTES of Email Votes
June, 2004

MOTION 1: Moved to add the following individuals to serve as members of the Elite Athlete Committee: Emilia Gheorghe, David Zhuang, Whitney Ping.

Motion by Sheri Pittman; Seconded by Tong Lee.
Motion passed: 13-0-0-0

Against: None; Abstain: None; No vote: None.

MOTION 2: Moved to approve the following individuals to serve as members of the Women's Development Committee: Gao Jun, Tawny Barth, Jackie Lee, Shih Santos.

Motion by Sheri Pittman; Seconded by Tong Lee.
Motion passed: 13-0-0-0

Against: None; Abstain: None; No vote: None.

MOTION 3: Moved to approve the following individuals to serve as members of the Collegiate NCAA Committee: Jackie Lee, Christian Lilleroos, Sean O'Neil, Anne Cribbs.

Background on Anne Cribbs: Gold Medalist in 1960 Rome Olympics in swimming at age 16. Co-founded the American Basketball League (ABL), the first female professional basketball league. CEO of the Bay Area Sports Organizing Committee (BASOC) which was responsible for the bid to host the 2012 Olympic Summer Games in San Francisco Bay Area. Currently the CEO of public relations firm, Anne Cribbs and Company. A very passionate supporter of women in sports.

Motion by Sheri Pittman; Seconded by Tong Lee.
Motion passed: 12-0-0-1

Against: None; Abstain: None; No vote: George B.

July, 2004

MOTION 1: Moved to amend Standing Rule #8 of the Nominating/Elections Committee by replacing the current language with the following: "Notwithstanding sections 2-7 above, the above dates will be adjusted in order for the elections to be completed following the conclusion of the Games." Rationale: To clarify language.

Motion by Sheri Pittman; Seconded by Bob Fox.
Motion Passed: 13-0

Against: None; Abstain: None; No vote: None.

Lily Yip for USATT Vice President

Successful Player
1992 & 1996 US Olympian
12 time US National Team Member

Successful Tournament Director & Promoter
5 Garden State Opens in NJ (4 star)
3 CCBA Cups in Chinatown NY

Successful Coach
Adam Hugh makes 2004 US Men's National Team and semis of Nationals at 16
Judy Hugh wins 2003 ITTF Junior Circuit Event in Canada
Da Tang, number one in the US Boys Under Ten Division

Past Member of the Board of Directors as a Player Representative
Junior Committee, Hardbat Committee
Officials Committee, Hall of Fame Committee

Goals
Raise funds for USATT
Build our junior program
Increase USATT Membership

Please help me grow Table Tennis and vote for me for Vice President of the USATT
USA Results at Singapore Open

Men's Singles Qualifier, USA Results: Group 20: Khoa Nguyen (USA). 1-0 (does not advance): Nguyen d. Pomehal Tosatskatanan (THA), 2-9,6; Kim Boghul (KOR) d. Nguyen, 7-8,3,7-8,4.

Men's Doubles Qualifier, USA Results: 7: Khoa Nguyen/Joo Bai Jun (USA/KOR) d. Renando Handoya/Mubarot Sisdo (INA), 1-0,2-0 (does not advance).

Women's Singles Qualifier, USA Results: Group 4: Whitney Ping (USA). 1-0 (does not advance): Ping d. Liu Jia Wei (SIN), 2-9,6; Kim Jing Jun (CHN) d. Ping, 2-9,6,5,2.

Women's Doubles Qualifier, USA Results: 16:5: Jasna Reed (USA), 1-0 (does not advance): Reed d. Joo Bai Jun (KOR), 3-0 (does not advance).
Can USA Catch China in Table Tennis?

By Scott Preiss, U.S. National Coach and Trainer (pingponglive.com)

A s optimistic a person as I am, I think not. It is not because Americans do not have the athletic ability, nor is it because of the lack of great facilities we have in our country. It has to do with the numbers game.

I have been training here in Shanghai for only two weeks but what I see is mind-boggling. For those of you that are rating conscious, imagine this. There are about 30 ten-year-olds at this training facility in Shanghai alone that are rated between 2000-2300. Yes, I said 10 years old.

The Ju Lu training school here in Shanghai is an elementary school that has a table tennis training school attached. The children attend regular school and also train four hours a day. This particular facility was built by a Hong Kong businessman and is maintained by the Chinese Government.

Although this is one of the top elementary table tennis training schools in all of China, it is still only one of 10 like it in the city of Shanghai.

My two boys Adam and Austin are training in the school five days a week, four hours a day. In just 7 days of training their improvement is remarkable, and they have adapted to this intense training already. Two to three hours a day are spent doing multi-ball training and one to two hours are devoted to match play and serve and return play.

During the day children aged 6-13 years of age come into the training school for training. All of them get individual training with the top coaches. Some of the coaches just train the 6- and 7-year-olds, and other coaches coach the older players. The coaches are meticulous in analyzing even the strokes of the 6-year-olds. They do however leave a little more time for the children to enjoy themselves than the older children. For the 9- and 10-year-olds, it is strictly serious business. What I do feel is that it is important for children to be with children. The camaraderie is so important in keeping the children motivated. In retrospect, in the United States it is more than common for young players to always be playing adults because of the lack of young players.

I myself have been training with the 10-year-olds and am overwhelmed by the aggressive play of these young players. Push a ball two times over the net and the ball is looped or smashed by you. And if you are not careful to watch these young players serve, the ball will fly all over the place when you try and return their serves.

The boys seem to outnumber the girls maybe 2-1, but don’t let that fool you, just take a look at who the World Women’s Champions have been for the past 20 years.

For the United States to have any chance at all in catching up with these great players we have to change our infrastructure for training. Most important I think the U.S. needs to have full-time training facilities where the young players can go to school and have the training environment at the school. Something similar to what the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs had years ago, a kind of resident training program.

I must mention too that almost all of the children that are invited to train here are excellent students. If a child is not keeping up with his or her studies it is simply not tolerated. There are hundreds of students waiting for the chance to fill in any vacant positions at the school.

So if you think you’re working hard at your game, you better work harder. That is what I am doing here.

An Official’s View

The Impact of the Blue Badge Requirement on Umpires and the Sport

By “Dr. Azmy”

In the busy city of Chicago and on a beautiful part of it, Navy Pier, the Killerspin US Open and ITTF Pro Tour took place. Despite any difficulties that surrounded the tournament, the comments of the players indicated that they enjoyed it. The Pier itself had an atmosphere of joyfulness, especially with the festivities of the 4th of July.

Behind the scenes negotiations, compromises and occasional surprises were faced before and during the tournament. Thanks to Sheri Pittman, Doru Gheorghe and Richard Lee for their support, firm standings, quick thinking and solutions. The USATT staff with its new additions, the tournament staff, the officials, the umpires, the volunteers, the players, coaches, and all those who contributed to the tournament, worked together in an atmosphere of cooperation. We were also very fortunate to have an ITTF Competition Manager, Didier Leroy who was very understanding, who contributed positive suggestions and ideas, and who accepted all the changes needed to accommodate a smooth-running tournament.

This article is concerned with the role of the officials and umpires through the tournament and beyond. The change of the size of the venue and the number of the tables created a serious problem for the officials and umpires. Faced with these problems the tournament schedule was changed. The organizers had to be there every day from 7:00am till the lights were turned off at the venue. The players played from 8:30am till after 10:00pm. The Chief Umpire, Aly Salam, took this as a challenge and succeeded to create a suitable schedule for the umpires. However, that schedule had to start before 8:30am and end at 10:00pm. The umpires worked so hard and worked long hours with superb performances.

The Officials Committee in its meeting was concerned about several issues. Few umpires had applied to serve at the tournament. Several reasons were mentioned, but the main one was the lack of financial support to cover the full expenses of the umpires. One has to dig in his pocket to come and serve at tournaments. Of course the added problem has been the longer hours of service every day of the tournament. Sometimes the umpires did not have time to have a break to eat. When the schedule is so demanding, it requires the presence of the officials for even longer hours. Special thanks have to be given to our guest umpires from overseas, especially the Japanese umpires, who pay more of their own expenses. But that also led us to other problems. Usually, at an international tournament there is a party for the umpires. It is in a way a thank you party for all the services the umpires have done. Some tournaments will provide three buffet meals for the umpires, two at the hotel and one at the venue, especially when the bottle of water at the hotel costs $5 and a cup of coffee costs $4.

The schedule will be murder, with a long break at the middle of the day and a day off for sightseeing. This time the shortage extended also to the number of volunteers, such as those who work on the computers all day. They are useful as they provide the information to be posted for players, coaches, and the audience in general, including results, match schedules, player names, and the tables where they are playing.

It is not my intention to be just critical; I hope these observations will be taken in a spirit of helpful hints. I also hope that we can find constructive ways to deal with these shortcomings in future tournaments.
Coaching Between Games

By Larry Hodges, USATT Certified National Coach

Many players at tournaments often find themselves either giving or receiving coaching from another player or coach at some point. But just what does a coach (or player) say to a player between games? What magic words are spoken that transforms a losing game into an inspired victory? 

If I had those words, I’d sell them for a lot of money.

Not having those words to give to you, here is the next best thing: what you can say to get the most out of the short time you have with your player between games. It might not transform your player into a member of the National Team, but it might turn a close match into a decisive victory. Or a decisive loss into a close victory.

Start by judging the player’s emotional state. Is he too tense? Too lackadaisical? If the first, your first job is to calm him down. If the latter, you must psych him up.

If you are coaching an overly excitable player, make sure to be calm and relaxed when you speak to him. Speak slowly and clearly. Tell him to take his time and just relax. If he is angry with himself, you have to get him to put it aside, maybe even say a joke to get his mind off whatever is bothering him. You have to clear his mind.

If the player seems lackluster, this doesn’t mean you do the reverse and talk fast and excitedly. (An interesting idea, however!) Tell him to fight! Use your own emotions to psych him up. Perhaps be a little excited. Let him know that his match is important, and perhaps he will start to think so as well. Note that a player often wants to win a match badly, and wants to try hard badly, but cannot get himself up for the match without help. You are that help.

Now that your player is properly psyched up and/or calm and relaxed, what do you tell him? The basic rule is: Not Too Much!

If you fill your player’s mind with ten intricate strategies for winning, all you’ve accomplished is confusing your player’s mind. He’s not going to remember all of that. It’s best to decide the most important things, and forget the rest.

A good breakdown of advice between games would be one or two things about serving, one or two things about receiving, and one thing about rallying. Always keep it short and simple.

During a rally a player can’t stop and think about each shot. The only time he can do that is when he is serving. Therefore, service strategy is the most useful strategy that can be given. It’s also where you can give the most useful tips, and expect them to be understood. When receiving, a player is in a ready position, and so is also more ready to follow advice.

Service strategy can be broken down into two types: general serves and surprise serves. General service strategies are those that the player should use mostly, i.e. serve short backspin to the forehand and follow with a loop, or serve fast and deep and following up by hitting. Surprise serves are those that a player can use to get a “free” point, but can only be used occasionally, such as a fast down-the-line serve to the forehand.

Receive strategy is usually very specific. Should the player loop the deep serve? Against short serves, should the player flip, push short or push long? Should he return serves to the forehand or backhand side? When giving advice on receive, you can combine things, such as: “Loop the deep serves mostly to his forehand, and push most of his short serves quick to his backhand.”

Rallying strategy is the hardest for most players to follow – they can’t stop and think over what to do, and usually they’re busy getting back into position, rather than being in a ready position as when receiving. Give simple and more general strategy, such as “Stay close to the table,” or “Go backhand to backhand, and then suddenly down the line or to the middle.” Or the generic, “Play aggressive!”

You can also combine tips. For example, you may tell a player to serve mostly short to the forehand or fast to the backhand, and follow the short serves with loops, the long serves with hitting.

Now for the clincher. Even if you don’t have a coach when you play, you can follow the above and coach yourself between games! Break things down as shown above, and pretty soon you’ll be your favorite, most reliable coach.

USA Women’s Coach Doru Gheorghe with USA #1 woman Gao Jun … keeping it simple?

United States Anti-Doping Agency

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.

Call the USADA Drug Reference Line at 800-233-0393

For additional information, please visit the USADA web site at www.usantidoping.org
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Sizes: 4-13.5, 14.5, 15.5

A lightweight table tennis shoe for the serious player.
Features:
- Synthetic upper portion with large mesh inserts for maximum breathability.
- Sole support overlays provide lateral stability.
- EVA mid sole for lightweight cushioning.
- AdiPRENE+ in the front of the shoe for dynamic cushioning for the ball of the foot.
- Gum rubber outer sole with integrated TORSION SYSTEM.

**adidas tanglin**
Sizes: 4-13.5, 14.5, 15.5

A Super lightweight Table Tennis shoe (only 9 ounces) for all table tennis players.
Features:
- The non-marking sole has a superior grip.
- The outer sole is divided into two parts, thus enabling unlimited heel and sole movement, while maintaining contact with the floor.
- The EVA midsole provides enhanced cushioning.
- The upper portion of the shoe is made of robust nubuc leather with breathable mesh inserts.
- The lacing system, along with the 3-stripes, support the forefoot during fast lateral movements.

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As a result you will find an unbelievable trampoline effect... best pre-requisite for an effective topspin stroke. You will hardly find any other rubber, transmitting the energy of a stroke into speed and spin in this way. Even topspin strokes not having been hit technically perfect will create tremendous spin and speed because of the steady tension of the upper and bottom layers of the rubber.

- **MORE ENERGY TRANSFER**
- **MORE SPEED GLUING EFFECT**
- **5% MORE ELASTICITY OF THE SPONGE**

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**EXTREME ENERGY**

**TENSOR TECHNOLOGY**

3. GENERATION
56 Events and 700 Players ... Overwhelming!

The ITTF Pro Tour was made up of six events - Men's and Women's Singles & Doubles plus Under 21 Men and Women. For most ITTF Pro Tour events, those are the only events. However, things are different in USA, where the ITTF Pro Tour was run in conjunction with the Killerspin US Open. Over the years, the number of events at the US Open has somewhat grown, from the single event in 1931, Men's Singles, to the current 56 events. Putting together a showcase tournament with six events is a monumental task. Putting together one with 56 events and over 700 players is rather overwhelming; that's the task faced each year in the U.S. They could, of course, cut down on the events - and face a very large number of disgruntled players! No, USA players have grown accustomed to a US Open that has been called by some a circus, and by others one of the best player tournaments in the world.

So players from all over the US and the world came to Chicago to spectate at the ITTF Pro Tour and Killerspin US Open, shop at the many equipment booths, enjoy the many attractions of Navy Pier (see photo) and yes, to play. Events included everything from the feature ITTF Pro Tour events, to age events from Under 3200 to Under 4200. 10 to Over 80, to hardbat events (rackets without sponge), to the rating events from Under 800 to Under 2600, as well as rating doubles events from Under 3200 to Under 4200.

Hired by USATT to run the Killerspin US Open was North American Table Tennis (NATT), which also runs the USA Nationals, the North American Teams, the Junior Olympics/Junior Nationals, and the North American Tour (a series of large tournaments run all over USA). NATT, founded in 1998 by former U.S. junior champion Richard Lee, is dominated by computer experts whose mantra is "efficiency."

No tournament is a success without its sponsors, and Killerspin is the title sponsor and the primary cause of the ITTF Pro Tour and US Open moving to Chicago. Other sponsors include Butterfly (tables), Nittaku (Balls), Stiga (USA Team Uniforms), USA Table Tennis and ITTF. Running the tournament are over 90 staff & officials, including umpire contingents from Canada (4), Germany (2), Netherlands Antilles (2) and Japan (8), along with 15 from the USA.

Winners of the Men's and Women's Singles events at the previous week's ITTF Pro Tour in Brazil were both present, Vladimir Samsonov of Belarus and Liu Jia of Austria, as were the runner-ups, reigning World Champion Werner Schlager of Austria and Croatia's Tamara Boros, semifinalist at the World Championships in 2003. In fact, other than China (in a pre-Olympic training camp), of the top 25 men in the world, only Tito Boll (injured) wasn't present.

The tournament took place at Navy Pier, known as Chicago's playground. Located on the shore of Lake Michigan, the fifty plus acres includes shops, restaurants and every imaginable attraction, from a Ferris wheel and other rides, to sailing tours, parks and games.

Men's Singles

By Larry Hodges & Ian Marshall

Life was tough for players from the American continent on the first day of play at the USA ITTF Pro Tour. Closest to recording a shock victory for the hosts was Mark Hazinski. Against Alexei Liventsov of Russia, the American eventually lost by the narrowest of margins in a tense seventh game.

"Starting in the fifth game, Mark controlled play," said USA Men's Coach Dan Seemiller. "Trailing three games to one, the American fought back to level matters and looked like the winner as he established a 7-2 lead in the decider - but it was not to be as Liventsov recovered and won the game 11-9 to secure first place in the group."

The only American to emerge as a group winner in the Men's Singles was Jared Lynch when neither of the players in his group - including Karl Jindrak of Austria - withdrew due to injury. For Canada, there was a mixture of both success and defeat. Hence Csaba beat Nigerian turned American Michael Oyebode in...
Scenes from the Killerspin US Open

and the ITTF Pro Tour

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seven games to book his place in the main draw, while colleague Pradeeban Peter-Paul lost to Dany Lo of France, the player who one week earlier in Brazil had beaten Thiago Monteiro in the opening round of the Men’s Singles before losing to Russia’s Fedor Kuzmin.

Surprise results were the defeat for the Dominican Republic’s Lin Ju and Russia’s Evgenij Fadeev. Lin Ju, who qualified for the Men’s Singles event at the Olympic Games in August, lost to Japan’s Kaiti Yoshinda while Christophe Bertin of France overcame Fadeev in a match that went the full distance, the Frenchman winning 11-8 in the decider.

The Men’s Qualifier had twenty-seven groups. The winners plus five “Lucky Losers,” drawn at random from players finishing in second place in their group, advanced to join the top 32 players in the main draw of 64. As luck would have it, Hazinski was one of the Lucky Losers!

**Round One: Injuries**

Kalimkos Kreaaga of Greece, seeded #5 here, withdrew with a back injury. Also out with a back injury for the third consecutive week is Canada’s Johnny Huang, who also withdrew from the ITTF Pro Tour tournaments in Chile and Brazil in the previous two weeks.

Meanwhile, last week’s winner in Rio de Janeiro, Vladimir Sanssonov of Belarus, successfully negotiated the opening round by beating Pierre-Luc Hinse of Canada but is now struggling with a shoulder injury. “I could feel it hurting in Brazil, but was able to continue,” he said. “It hurt it again in practice yesterday. I decided to see how it was this morning but it’s not good.” Sanssonov said that he’ll see how it is when he warms up for his next round match tonight but he seemed reasonably sure that he won’t be playing in the second round against Aleksandar Karakasovic. “He’s a strong player and it’s hard to anticipate his shots, he’s very talented.” Sanssonov quite understandably doesn’t want to risk an injury with important training ahead next week in preparation for the Olympic Games. As it turned out, however, Sanssonov would continue right to the semifinals.

Sanssonov is a tremendous player to watch but you can guarantee that the crowd will always throng to see one man in action, and so it was in Chicago; everybody wants to see the man heralded by many as the greatest player ever, Jan-Ove Waldner of Sweden. In round one he beat Jared Lynch of the USA. The contest can best be described as an exhibition match with Waldner entertaining the adoring crowds with his incredible skills, and winning 4-1.

Meanwhile, Romania’s Adrian Crisan must be wondering when fortune will smile his way. Last week in Brazil he had five match points against Vladimir Sanssonov before losing; today he lost another seven-game encounter to Japan’s Shu Arai.

The main comeback of the opening round was by Korea’s Yoon Jae Young. He lost the first three games against Denmark’s Allan Bentson before winning the next four to emerge victorious. Also victorious in seven games were Danny Heister of the Netherlands and Geir Erlandsen of Norway, beating Russia’s Maksim Shmyryev and Korea’s Lee Chul Seung respectively.

Meanwhile, for #1 seed Ryu Seung Min, there were no alarms; he beat Eric Owens of the USA in straight games while reigning World Champion, Werner Schlager, equally had no moments of drama, beating Guillermo Muñoz Rosquille of Mexico to progress to the second round.

**Men’s Round Two: Difficult to Find Words**

“It’s difficult to find words,” said 1991 Men’s World Champion Jörgen Persson after his loss to Korea’s Yoon Jae Young. USA Men’s Coach Dan Seemiller perhaps summed it up best: “Persson should have won 7-0!”

Persson won the first three games, then lost four in a row. In the fourth game he led 7-3; in the fifth, 7-2; in the sixth, 10-5 (quintuple match point!); and in the seventh, 7-3 and 9-7. It’s difficult to find words but he lost, 3-4,8,11,9,9. Young had also come back from down 0-3 in the first round, against Allan Bentson.

Meanwhile, Jean-Michel Saive of Belgium had a relatively comfortable time against Jens Lundqvist of Sweden, winning at 7,5,8,9. “He’s a good European player,” said Saive. “He’s been in a lot of finals and he’s ten years younger. Serve and receive was the key; he has a big forehand, neither of us block well, so whoever attacked first usually won.” Saive explained that he will be training in Belgium for the Olympics with teammates such as his brother Philip and Martin Bratanov while other European players will be joining them, including Patrick Chila, Trinko Keen, Danny Heister and Bojan Tokic.

“l’ve been traveling a lot and i like to train at home where I can set my own schedule,” he added.

Also through with a degree of comfort is Waldner, who also had a relatively easy time, beating Slobodan Grbic in straight games. He won the final game 13-11, returning a Grbic forehand topspin at 11-all that brought gasps of disbelief from those watching the contest; it was Waldner magic. “He has a very good backhand, especially from the middle, so I had to place the ball.” Waldner said. “It was five very tough sets, he beat Primorac last tournament.”

After the US Open, Waldner and Austrian players, including Werner Schlager, will be in Sweden training with the Swedish team in preparation for the Olympics. “I plan to play in the Olympics and through the 2005 season, including the World Championships. After 2005, I don’t plan on playing internationally so much.” Of the Olympics, he said, “It’s a very good tournament for me, since you only play one match a day!”

He also spoke about how the game has become faster and faster during his career, and spoke disparagingly of the larger 40mm ball. “It was supposed to slow the game down, but the game is just as fast as before the switch, and now the ball sometimes bounces terribly. The quality of the balls isn’t as good.”

Meanwhile, Trinko Keen of the Netherlands pulled off something of an upset over Denmark’s Michael Maze, but all other matches went as seeded. Joo Se Hyuk advanced when Danny Heister withdrew with a knee injury.

**Men’s Round Three: World Champion Checked Out**

The Czech Republic’s Petr Korbel beat reigning World Champion Werner Schlager of Austria 11,7,8,5, to cause the biggest upset in the third round of Men’s Singles.

Korbel, the man who beat China’s Liu Guozheng at the World Championships in Paris in 2003 and finished fourth at the 2004 Olympics in men’s singles, attacked relentlessly, never giving Schlager a chance to mount a recovery and duly booked his ticket for the quarterfinals.

Meanwhile, in what was possibly the most interesting match of the round, Chuan Chih-Yuan of Chinese Taipei won a tough encounter against Waldner, 9-7,4-11,8,9. “He’s supposed to win,” said Waldner, who may have been considered the greatest ever but is now 38 years old. “He’s
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Joo Se Hyuk of Korea chopped and looped his way to the semifinals.

number four in the World. I'm number 21," he added. Waldner led 8-7 in the sixth, missed two topspins but at 9-9 was still in the match; alas for the Swede the man from Chinese Taipei won the next two points and the match.

"He's very good at controlling play with his serve and return of serve," Chuan said of Waldner. "Once in the rally, I'm more comfortable, especially with my backhand. His backhand seemed soft today; the last time we played, I won, but it was also close."

"Today, my return of serve and backhand weren't so good," added Waldner who concurred with his opponent's assessment of the match. "He's very fast and you have to take control early. Once in the rally, it's difficult staying at the table with him."

Chuan is very fast and he has one major title to his credit that Waldner has never owned; in 2002 he won the Men's Singles event at the ITTF Pro Tour Grand Finals, one of the few major events that may forever elude the legendary Swede.

**Topspin Defenders**

A match between two defenders can be a dull, tedious expedite affair, but not when the protagonists are Joo Se Hyuk of Korea and Chen Weixing of Austria. The two faced each other in the third round of Men's Singles and produced the best forehand topspin exchanges seen in the tournament.

Both quite unpredictably would chop or counterloop at will. "This is what we should be teaching our youth," said Berndt Mann, a longtime advocate of defensive play in the U.S. Joo Se Hyuk had a little more power and that was seemingly the difference as he won, 9-11, 11-9, 7-8, 6-6.

However, for the master of comebacks, Korea's Yoon Jae Young, it was the end of the road; in round one he had lost the first three games against Denmark's Allan Bentzen and won; in round two he had performed the same escape against Sweden's Jörgen Persson. Once again in round three he lost the first three games, then he won the next two, but this time there was no miraculous recovery as Fredrik Hakansson won the sixth game and a passage to the quarters.

Oh Sang Eun also lost this round, although it looked in the early stages that an upset may be about to happen. He won the first game against Vladimir Samsonov, who seemed to be too passive. The man from Belarus leveled it at one game all and then lost the third before becoming more aggressive to win the next three games and the match.

Meanwhile, for Jean-Michel Saive it was the end of the road. The Belgian star lost in five games to Germany's Peter Franz, the player who five days earlier had won the Men's Doubles title with Sweden's Jens Lundqvist in Brazil. "Peter lost to Saive last week by four games to one," said Thomas Keinath, Franz's coach in the match. "This time, we changed tactics. Peter attacked more, flipped the serves more aggressively and at wide angles, pushing Saive off the table and allowing Peter to attack. He would mostly topspin wide to Saive's backhand, and stay out of counterlooping rallies."

Chiang Peng-Lung of Chinese Taipei defeated Sweden's Peter Karlsson in seven games. Top seeded Ryu Seung Min lost his first game of the tournament but quickly put the blemish behind him in beating Trinko Keen of the Netherlands, 6-9, 9-4, to move yet again into a Men's Singles quarterfinal on the ITTF Pro Tour.

**Men's Quarterfinals: The Fastest Gun in Chicago**

Ryu duly booked his place in the semifinals of the Men's Singles at an ITTF Pro Tour event for the seventh time this year by beating Sweden's Fredrik Hakansson. The only occasion the Korean hasn't reached the semifinals in 2004 was in Greece when he lost in the round of sixteen to Ma Lin of China in a close seven-game encounter. He is a pleasure to watch, his footwork is an example to all, with speed the key to his success.

Can there be anyone in the world who can cover as much ground with his forehand as Ryu? One candidate might be standing a couple dozen feet from him as he plays; his coach, Kim Taek Soo, recently retired as a player. Kim has been coaching and training Ryu for nearly seven years, since he was fifteen years old. Now 21 and ranked #4 in the world and the top seed here in Chicago, Ryu plays almost the same as coach Kim: an all-out forehand topspinning penholder with inverted rubber.

He overwhelmed Sweden's Fredrik Hakansson, 12-9, 9-2, with his speed and forehand attack. "His defense was very good," said Ryu; when the Korean served, Hakansson would often flip aggressively at very wide angles and Ryu would topspin nearly all of them with his forehand, putting the Swede on the defensive.
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Danish Delight: Finn Tugwell
By Larry Hodges & Ian Marshall

Finn Tugwell of Denmark, currently ranked #81 in the world, explained he’d had some chances against Croatia’s Zoran Primorac in the past but had never beaten him. “In our past matches, I always lost the big points,” he said. In the first round of men’s singles in the USA ITTF Pro Tour, he was more aggressive; he made fewer mistakes and won 11,6, 9,5 to progress to the second round of Men’s Singles.

“He mostly served with the backhand, which is his best serve,” he said. “He used his forehand serve some but it’s not as good, I controlled his backhand serve well today; also, I came into my game on my serve, if you know what I mean.” Primorac predominantly serves with the backhand from the middle of the table; the ball often being directed short to his opponent’s forehand, a technique that was often used by the legendary Hungarian Tibor Klampar and a technique that has served the Croatian well over the years but not today against Tugwell.

In the next round Tugwell would lose to his German Bundesliga teammate from Frickenhausen, Peter Franz of Germany. They haven’t played each other much recently in tournaments but since they practice together frequently, both know each other’s game. Both will be playing in France next year with Tugwell dividing his time between training in Denmark and for Bordeaux.

The week before, at the Brazil ITTF Pro Tour, Tugwell had defeated Korea’s Lee Chul Seung 4-1 to make the final sixteen of Men’s Singles, where he lost a heart-breaking 11-9 in the seventh match to China Taipei’s Chiang Peng-Lung. He also made the quarterfinals in Men’s Doubles with Danish teammate and Olympic Doubles partner Michael Maze.

Quarterfinalist Fredrik Hakansson of Sweden

“He has to control the point when he receives by mixing short returns and sudden very deep ones, either by flicking or pushing; when he goes deep, it has to go very deep, so he has time to attack the next ball,” said Kim. One point was rather amusing. Ryu was well off to the right, and Hakansson returned the ball short; unable to reach the ball with his racket, Ryu made a perfect left-handed drive, with his bare hand! (No, not a legal return!)

Ryu’s adversary in the first semifinal would be his colleague, Joo Se Hyuk, who beat the Czech Republic’s Petr Korbel in a match littered with brilliant points. Joo always seemed to stay in the points and could counterloop any ball with his forehand, seemingly at will. Unable to go to the forehand, Korbel had to go to the impenetrable backhand defense of the Korean; Joo eventually won, 10,5,7,5.

Also through to the semifinals for the second consecutive week was Vladimir Samsonov of Belarus. He beat Peter Franz of Germany, 7,9,13,11,9 in a hard-fought encounter. In the third, he was down 4-9, then ahead 10-9, down 10-11 and finally won 15-13; meanwhile in the fourth, he led 10-7, then was down 10-11, before winning 13-11, while in the game that brought matters to an end he trailed 8-9, then won the last three points with outstanding topspin play the order of the day. “I need to play offensively against him,” said Samsonov. “If I played to his backhand, he never makes mistakes. I tried to move him side to side, then go to the body.”

Also into the semifinals is #2 seed Chuan Chih-Yuan, who defeated Chinese Taipei compatriot Chiang Peng-Lung – a long way to travel to play your teammate!

Men’s Semifinals: Mother Knows Best

Chuan overcome reigning European champion Vladimir Samsonov for the first time in his career in international competition to progress to the final of Men’s Singles.

The person he can thank is his mother Lee Kuei-Mei, a former member of the Chinese Taipei national team. She has been his coach since the age of eight, including here in Chicago.

The only previous encounter between Chuan and Samsonov was in July of 2000, when the latter had won in three straight games in Rio de Janeiro at the ITTF Pro Tour Brazilian Open. On that occasion Samsonov progressed to beat Ma Lin in the quarters and Kong Linghui in the semi before eventually losing at the final hurdle to the man who, at the time, was the reigning Olympic champion, Liu Guoliang. In those days, not so far distant, games were played to 21 and in major tournaments singles matches were best of five. This would be the first meeting between the two with the 11-point scoring system.

“He wasn’t so good today,” said Chuan. “He made a great many mistakes, especially against my serve.” Samsonov did control the start of many rallies but the man from Chinese Taipei usually took control after two or three exchanges, putting Samsonov on the defensive. The stylish Samsonov is blessed with good anticipation but couldn’t compete with Chuan’s speed. In the third game, Chuan led 5-1, then trailed 8-10 before recovering to win 12-10. He then won the fourth game 13-11 when Samsonov missed two topspins towards the end, while in the fifth game the man from Belarus led 4-2, then lost seven points in a row! As
Samsonov said in Brazil last week, “That’s the way it goes.” Chuan won, 5-7, 10, 11, 7.

The second semifinal, between Korean teammates Ryu Seung Min and Joo Se Hyuk, was somewhat uneventful. The rallies were often spectacular with Ryu topspinning and Joo returning with his own topspin or changing matters by playing backspin strokes. The two compatriots knew each other too well and Ryu duly prevailed, 8-5, 7-6, 6-6. to set up a final that will be between the two players who are considered by many to have the fastest footwork in the world: Chuan Chih-Yuan and Ryu Seung Min.

**Men’s Final: The Four Fastest Feet in Table Tennis**

Ryu Seung Min added a second title to his collection by beating Chuan Chih-Yuan in the Men’s Singles final to add to the Men’s Doubles title he won earlier in the afternoon.

The contest was between two players who probably have the fastest footwork in the world of table tennis, the result an action-packed encounter at breakneck speed and one thoroughly enjoyed by the crowd.

Both protagonists served throughout the match with their forehands. Chuan is a shakehands grip player with a consistent backhand topspin and a fierce forehand attack while Ryu is a penhold topspin player from Korea.

Korean coach and the man who has been Ryu’s mentor for the last 15 years, Sanisonov said in Brazil last week, “That’s the way it goes.” Chuan won.

The obvious strategy for both was to try to avoid the other’s forehand with Ryu blocking very consistently from the backhand court. Eventually, one player would execute a forehand and when that happened the points were over rather quickly; in particular Ryu made every effort to play his forehand knowing that was a match-winning stroke.

The opening three games were very close. Ryu won the first, 11-9; in the second, he held game points at 10-9, 11-10, 13-12 and 14-13 but couldn’t convert, Chuan winning 16-14. The highlight of the game was at 13-all, when Chuan fired fierce forehand top spins wide to the Korean’s backhand, who topspin fished seven back from the barriers, just as his coach used to do, and then stepped around to play a devastating forehand topspin winner – again, just as his coach used to do!

The third game was equally enthralling, equally exciting and seemingly whoever served won the point. Chuan had two game points and Ryu had four before eventually winning 15-13 to lead by two games to one. In the fourth, the Chinese Taipei man led 6-4 but from that moment on the match was dominated by Ryu. He won 13 of the next 14 points, and 24 of the next 28, to clinch the fifth 11-7 and the sixth 11-3. It seemed that the Korean could do no wrong. Chuan made mistakes and couldn’t stop the Korean attacking strongly after the service. Ryu won, 9-14, 13, 7-3.

“I told Ryu to play forehand to forehand wherever possible,” explained Kim, “Also, when blocking, concentrate on consistency, don’t try to block too hard, since Chuan is better when the game is fast.”

The strategy worked and Ryu had repeated the success gained in Egypt earlier in the year where he had won both the Men’s Singles and Doubles titles. It seems that the niche created by the retirement of Kim has been filled – by his protégé.

**Men’s Doubles: Koreans Repeat Success**

Lee Chul Seung and Ryu Seung Min of Korea repeated the success achieved at the Egypt Open earlier in the year to win their second Men’s Doubles title on the ITTF Pro Tour in 2004. In Cairo, in early May, they had beaten top seeds Karl Jindrak and Werner Schlager of Austria to capture gold.

In Chicago they overcame Chen Weixing of Austria and Lin Ju of the Dominican Republic to be crowned champions.

En route to the final they had been extended the full seven games on two occasions: against Chiang Peng-Lung and Chuan Chih-Yuan of Chinese Taipei in round one and against their Korean colleagues Choi Hyun Jin and Lee Jung Woo in the semis; the quarterfinal encounter against the two left-handers from the Netherlands, Danny Heister and Trinko Keen, were a straight games victory.

Likewise, their opponents in the final, Chen Weixing and Lin Ju, had been extended to seven games on two occasions. First by the Koreans Joo Se Hyuk and Oh Sung Eun in round one and then by the Danes, Allan Bentsen and Martin Monrad, in the quarters. They defeated the Japanese duo of Toshio Tasaki and Kuii Yoshida in five games in the semifinals.

The final was a spectacular affair; a classic table tennis match, attackers versus defenders, but defenders with very powerful forehand loops.

However, against backspin play the Koreans excel. They won the first three games in style and in the fourth, after trailing 8-10, won three points in succession to get match point; it was a point they faltered to convert. Chen Weixing and Lin Ju won the next three points, but there was to be no fairy tale recovery. Lee Chul Seung and Ryu Seung Min won the fifth game and the match, 7-5, 12, 8, to become the champions and win the fourth Men’s Doubles title of their careers on the ITTF Pro Tour.
Women's Singles
By Larry Hodges & Ian Marshall

Meanwhile, also extended the full distance were Romania's Adriana Zamfir and Kwok Fong Fong, now living in Korea. Zamfir beat the Romanian Kim Kyung Ha while Kwok Fong Fong ended the hopes of reigning European champion Otilia Badescu.

There were no problems for the top female player in the USA. Gao Jun, who is now studying and training in China, beat Huang I Hwa of Chinese Taipei in straight games. "I played my game," said Gao. "I think I have more experience than her and that was the biggest difference." Gao is a third year student, majoring in economics. She's a full-time student but said she is taking fewer classes this year, perhaps one of the reasons for her success in recent ITTF Pro Tour events.

Round Two: Top Seeds Progress
The top four seeds - Kim Kyung Ah of Korea, Tamara Boros of Croatia, Liu Jia of Austria and Liu Jia Wei of Singapore - all came through the second round unscathed, and all won in impressive style, without any of them losing a single game.

Top seed Kim Kyung Ah, ranked #6 in the world, proved too strong for Romania's Adriana Zamfir. "What surprised me was how good her serve was," said Zamfir. "You don't usually expect that from a backspin player." Kim won, 7,3,9,6. "I'd push, push, then topspin, then either smash or push again. What made it difficult is that she has a very good quick hit.

Round One: Cornelia Lays The Ghosts To Rest
The match to catch the eye in round one of Women's Singles at the ITTF Pro Tour Killerspin Open was the contest between the Croatian topspin player Cornelia Vaida and the Belarus defender Tatiana Kostromina. The match went to Vaida in five games but there were some nervous moments in that crucial fifth game; the Croatian led 9-5, Kostromina won the next four points, but to her credit Vaida kept her nerve and emerged victorious.

"The most important thing to do against her is to stay calm," said Vaida. "The last time I played her I led 8-4 in the seventh, and lost!" She admitted that leading 8-4 in the fifth this game, she remembered blowing that lead before but was able to push it out of her mind. "At 9-9, I wasn't nervous; at 9-5, that's when I was nervous!" she added.

Vaida directed her attacks towards the body of the Belarus star and Kostromina did likewise in an effort to put pressure on the eventual victor. "By going to my middle, it takes away the angles I can get for winners and gives me less table in crosscourt shots," Vaida said. "She kept her backspin returns very, very deep it was very difficult to attack."

Vaida learned her skills in Romania, as USATT Women's Coach and former Romanian Coach Teodor "Duru" Gheorghe explained: "She grew up and learned to play in Romania and moved to Croatia when she was about sixteen. She and Kostromina used to play for the same team in Croatia, so they know each other's games well."

The first round of Women's Singles also proved successful for the two young Japanese players who had been on duty for their country in the recent Liebherr World Team Championships in Doha; both Ai Fujinuma and Sayaka Hirano won in seven games, beating Jun Hye Kyung of Korea and Veronika Pavlovia of Belarus respectively.

Women's Singles Runner-up Tamara Boros of Croatia... almost came back.
A Tale of Three Women
By Alan Williams, Larry Hodges & Ian Marshall

It was a tale of woe for the host nation in the second round of the Women’s Singles. All three USA players – Jasna Reed, Gao Jun and Wang Chen – had their hopes end this round.

Jasna Reed had her chances against Cornelia Vaida of Croatia but at 9-9 in the seventh, she served and backhand looped off the end. It gave Vaida a chance; she took the chance with a backhand topspin that the American blocked off the end to win the day. Vaida won 6,8,-9,4,9,-8,9. The previous day, Vaida had said that she was nervous when leading 8-4, but was calm at 9-9 – and sure enough, she lost one game from 8-4 ahead but at 9-9 in the last game was calmness personified and won!

Tactically, she said, “I wanted to play very strong and aggressive but my coach wanted me to be more consistent, not so strong; when I played strong, Jasna also played strong. Her backhand is especially strong.”

It was a heartbreaker for Jasna; she collapsed into a heap in front of her coach, tears welling in her eyes. “I wanted this! I wanted this!” she sobbed. “I could not stay focused, I thought about the spectators, I did not stay in the court!” The distraught American star was left to relive her disappointment as Cornelia advanced to the quarterfinals.

Meanwhile for USA, Gao Jun lost without hitting a ball. She had to default to fellow East China University of Science and Technology team member An Konishi, owing to a rather freak accident.

“I am sorry to disappoint my fans,” said Gao Jun. “I cannot play my best and if I cannot play my best, I should not play; I slipped and fell this morning, catching my knee on the corner of the table.” A red scrape about eight inches long running across her swollen knee cap was silent testimony to her pain.

Jasna Reed and Gao Jun were both out, and so too was the third American, Wang Chen. She lost to the defensive skills of Viktoria Pavlovich of Belarus, 8,14,-5,10,9.

It was a classic match; the topspin player versus the backspin artist and it was the match that pleased the crowd the most. Moving in and out, side to side, Pavlovich showed amazing court coverage against the attacking topspins of her opponent but like many modern defenders, she is more than a steady backspin player. She artfully varies the pace and depth of her returns, using a variety of strokes to upset her opponent’s timing. She can also suddenly switch from defense to offense and often did so to great effect.

The match result was a 4-1 victory for Pavlovich but every game was close and the scores did not reflect the intensity of the struggle. “She’s a very tough competitor, very steady, very consistent,” the ever-gracious Wang Chen granted. It was the first meeting between the two and despite the frustration of such close losses against a tenacious defender, Wang Chen had nothing but praise for her opponent. “She’s a great athlete and very deserving of the victory.”

The partisan USA crowd cheered not only for their own player, Wang Chen, but also applauded the spectacular retrieving and quick attacks of Pavlovich.

So from tears of frustration, to the freakish accident, to the gracious acceptance of superior performance, three women with varying reactions but one thing in common…they will all be watching the quarterfinals.

Semifinals: Defenders Demise

Two defensive players reached the semifinals of Women’s Singles, but neither will be in the final. Singapore’s Li Jia Wei beat top seeded Kim, while Boros overcame Pavlovich.

Li gave a dazzling demonstration of consistent attacking play to beat Kim, 8,-8,7,13,-11,9. The girl from Singapore, who uses short pimples on the forehand, didn’t waste time pushing or playing softly; against the Korean’s backspin returns, her topspin play was a model of consistency. She directed her attacks towards the body of her opponent, waiting for an opportunity to arise; when it did she smashed.

Li is best known for her quick over-the-table play but in Chicago she demonstrated that against backspin play she is cruelly efficient and the only factor that could have prevented victory was concentration. She sometimes played several careless points in a row but more than compensated with her strong attack when the need arose. It was the second time at the international level that the pair had met; the last time was in May 2000 when Li also had prevailed at the World Club Championships.

It was the fifth game that saw some of the most exhilarating table tennis. Li led 10-8 and 11-10 but Kim, suddenly playing more aggressively, often smashing and counter-hitting, recovered to win 13-11. The last two points of this game were spectacular with the Korean chopping at least a dozen balls to move to 12-11 and then winning the next point with a deep backspin stroke after a fast counter-hitting rally! However, the sixth game brought matters to an end. Li led 10-6, then missed two backhand topspins; the vital last point proved somewhat elusive, but to her relief, Kim erred with a smash and the Singaporean had the victory.

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Secondary photos of the quarterfinalists.

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Choppers Kim Kyung Ah and Viktoria Pavlovich lost out in the semifinals.

gave me a very tough match," said Boros. "This time she didn’t play quite as well. I don’t get to play backspin players very often and so was worried but I felt very good at the table today. I tend to try to play too strongly against this style of play but my coach told me to not play too strongly, to take it easy.” A lesson for most players against choppers - even the best don’t try to overpower them.

Women’s Doubles: Title For Hosts In Chicago
By Larry Hodges & Ian Marshall

Wang Chen of the USA and Liu Jia of Austria won the Women’s Doubles title at the USA ITTF Pro Tour, beating Tatyana Kostromina and Viktoria Pavlovich in the final. It was the fifth time that they had played together on the ITTF Pro Tour and it was most certainly their most successful, their previous best being in 2003 when they had reached the quarterfinals in Japan.

The route to the final had certainly been tough. The pair beat Korea’s Kowk Fong Fong and Lee Hyang Mi in seven games in round one, Chinese Taipei’s Huang Hwa and Le Yun Feng in six games in round two, and with a degree of comfort, the top seeds Jing Jun Hong and Li Jia Wei of Singapore in the semifinal.

Meanwhile, the Belarus defenders Tatyana Kostromina and Viktoria Pavlovich saved two match points in the seventh game against Jun Hye Kyung and Kim Kyung Ha of Korea in the quarters before winning four points in a row to progress to the penultimate stage, where they once again faced Koreans and were once again successful, beating Kim Kyung Ah and Park Kyung Ae in six games.

The final saw Wang Chen and Liu Jia make a dream start, winning the first three games but not without some moments of tension. Early in the first game, Kostromina was warned for dropping her hand below the table when serving, and at 9-10 she was faulted. The crowd voiced its disapproval, as it handed the game to Wang Chen and Liu Jia. who then dominated the second, winning 11-4. They maintained the momentum in the third, winning 11-7. However, in the third game at 2-2 there was an enforced pause in play; as the Belarus pair prepared to serve two rather large birds flew directly over the table, only about eight or ten feet above the playing surface!

One game away from defeat Pavlovich and Kostromina tried to stage a comeback. They won the fifth game 11-5, but in the sixth, Wang Chen and Liu Jia once again prevailed - but as so often happens that vital last point proved elusive. They led 10-4, but the girls from Belarus recovered to 10-8 at which stage the champions elected called for a time out. The next point again went to Kostromina and Pavlovich (10-9), and the crowd was on the edge of its seats leaning forward in anticipation. A long, careful rally followed, with steady topspins against consistent backspin returns, until finally one topspin hit the net, hung for a split second and crawled agonizingly over, unreturnable. Point, match and title to Wang Chen and Liu Jia, 9-4, 7-1, 9. The USA had a champion of its own at an ITTF Pro Tour tournament on American soil. (The only other player representing USA to win an ITTF Pro Tour Men’s or Women’s event was Cheng Yinghua, men’s doubles with Jean-Michel Saive at the USA ITTF Pro Tour way back in 1998.)

"I lost to Pavlovich in the singles,” Wang Chen said. “I tried to play too strongly, this time we played softer and steadier, moved them around more, especially in and out, we also pushed more. In most rallies, one of us would play strong, the other soft, they are a very strong team, very consistent. We knew it would be very difficult, maybe seven games but we played so well.” Regarding the comeback at the end, Wang Chen added: “They tried to attack much more at the end, and their shots went on!”

Wang Chen in good form is excellent news for the USA and there is further good news for the USA; next year she will gain USA citizenship which will give the Americans a formidable women’s team which could include Gao Jun, Jasna Reed, Tawny Banh … and Wang Chen.

Final: Li Overcomes Near Comeback To Secure First Title

Singapore’s Li Jia Wei won her first ever Women’s Singles title on the ITTF Pro Tour when she beat Boros in the final; her previous best had been in Wels, Austria, in January 2002 when she had been runner-up to the Chinese penholder, Li Nan.
The final was a match between the topspin player with the gravity defying high toss serve, Boros, and the close-to-the-table attacker who serves with the backhand, Li, a player renowned for her fast, over-the-table backhand topspin.

The girl from Singapore won the first three games, 6,6,4, and went up 4-1 in the fourth – but then something happened. "I wanted to win and became timid, I played too softly," said Li after the match; from that stage what appeared to be one way traffic became a duel.

Boros won the next nine points to lead 10-4, eventually winning 11-8. In the fifth she led throughout, again winning 11-8. In the sixth Boros made a splendid start, and went ahead 4-1 – but then lost five points in a row! It seemed the tide had turned back in favor of Li. who serving, went ahead 7-5; the next seven points were all won by the server, and at 10-9 Li had her first match point. She served, played a backhand topspin, Boros returned with a brave forehand topspin, won the point and the next two, to win game six.

Throughout the seventh game Boros was the aggressor but she had to plan the strategy herself. At 2-2 her coach, Neven Cegnar, having been warmed earlier, was red carded and had to leave his courtside seat. However, Boros made errors; the key point came at 5-4 with Li leading. The Singapore girl played a weak topspin but Boros missed the opportunity, her backhand smash going off. The very next point exactly the same thing happened, but this time the backhand smash hit the table – but she seemed even more irritated now that she’d missed such an easy shot in the previous rally, and seemed distracted. She lost the next five points to trail 5-10. It was now a desperate situation but Boros kept fighting. She served and followed with a sealing backhand topspin to save match point; then she won the next point, possibly the best of the match, hitting "winner" after "winner" before finally winning the point.

However, it was to be the last point she would win. Li composed herself and won the next point and the USA ITTF Pro Tour Women’s Singles title, 6,6,4,8,8,11-7.

"Relax, don’t worry about the score, stay aggressive," was Li’s relieved comment after the match and the key to her victory.

"I played the wrong tactics. I was too far from the table and couldn’t play strong backhands," Boros said. "I need to stay closer to the table against her." Boros further explained that she had experienced trouble concentrating the first three games and was bothered by the backhand smash she’d missed at 5-4 in the seventh and on how it had affected her concentration; on such crucial points are championships won and lost.
by downing Steve Varela iii 5. MCCoullum began and has a thriving league going (with.
times-a-week club on the Penn State campus where
semis. had handed him. Hank. who's fostering a 3-
table. made the mistake of allowing Steve. whod
with easy-game wins. then. dropping back from the
hooray. 12 women players),had moved tothe semi's
games. she took this 50's title from Charlene. Men's cash prize for the
persevere with her regimen of bicycling. jogging swimming. and other
other semi's. Charlene Liu defeated Suzanna Sanders. ever ready to
opening 16-14 game to Bella Livshin and with it her momentum. In the
knocked offGreg Gingold 12-10 in the 4th. to spin-
d Presenter and
Staff (1 can do anything". was assigned the role of Awai

win--Those who are fifteen, sixteen. they have a future," he says smiling.
are surprised to see the 400-point underdog's 1st-game wip. then are
Oh well. sportingly he and Doniia are about to take off for Vegas.

Richard Hicks. the only Triple Winner at the Open: Over 60 Men's Singles &
Doubles. Over 50 Doubles
League play for his German Langen Club. Hicks. 66. said playing Horst and his long pips in the final
was "a little bit like playing myself." Dick acknowledged that Horst had a strong loop. but. he
said. "When I got it back. he stopped looping. and allowed me to get in some backhand flicks." Hence.
in straight games. another major title for Hicks.

Photo by Mal Anderson ©2004

Over 70/80's Play
In early round robin 70's competition. Neil Myers. who's successfully
battled prostate cancer with radiation treatments ("Have your blood tested.
look for any rapid rise in PSA level—140,000 die of this cancer every
year") also battled his way in 5 by Lynnwood Smith. fresh off his WORLD
Over 70 Doubles win (see accompanying article). Mark Shapiro. a retired
Designing Engineer. the #1 player in age 55-59 competition in St. Petersburg
(Leningrad). Russia 13 years ago before coming to the States. easily stopped
not only N.J.'s Joyce Miller. the only woman brave enough to enter the
field. but bearded Boggan too.

Myers. who feels the USATT ought to include Senior Olympic
matches in their ratings. and who says he's improved his game by favoring
a 3rd-ball attack ("I enjoy the play more. and. besides. it makes my
opponent nervous") initially may have made old-pro George Hendry.
now 83. a wee bit trembly. but George. in winning 9-10. 6. 5. quickly
lowered any possible anxiety he may have had with the same scrupulous
care he. as a diabetic takes. in lowering his sugar content.

Shapiro. given to outbursts in Russian that in English might well
cause the ump to whip out an answering line or two and an equally
combative card. seems really a sweet Solll who plays three times a week at his
Columbus. Ohio Club and is nurtured by his attractive wife. Liana. 25
years his junior. and a registered nurse. No, Mark did not beat 77-year-old
Grady Gordon in the semi's because if anything momentarily goes wrong
with Grady's health or his game the doctor immediately fixes it. Hence he
recently had right wrist surgery to take out an arthritic bone ("Have your
blood tested. look for any rapid rise in PSA level—140,000 die of this cancer every
year") and orthoscopic surgery for a rotator cuff tear in his right shoulder. For the first time in
1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9 meetings—that also includes his-10. 7. 13. 9 ("I was too tentative") lose in
the 75's here—he was able to beat George. Grady said he took his cue
from his friend Hugh Lax: "You've got to think faster. move quicker." said
Hug. So. minimizing the effect of Hendry's long and short pips table
life. Liana. 25 years his junior. and a registered nurse. No. Mark did not beat 77-year-old
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cuff tear in his right shoulder. For the first time in 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9
meetings—that also includes his-10. 7. 13. 9 ("I was too tentative") lose in
the 75’s here—he was able to beat George. Grady said he took his cue
from his friend Hugh Lax: "You've got to think faster. move quicker." said
Hug. So. minimizing the effect of Hendry’s long and short pips table
game. he rolled to George’s backhand and swatted just enough forehands
in for an 1-9 in the 4th win.

The 70 Doubles was a nail-biter. Smith/Boggan over Hendry/Gordon.
14-12 in the 5th. It was Lynnwood's first U.S. Championship. and the 7th
straight U.S. Open U.S. Closed Over 70 Doubles Championship for Tim
whose earlier wins were with regular partner Frank Dwelly and Leon
Ruderman.

Hendry of course won the round robin 80's. Did I say of course? Arthur "Buster" Chase. 87. after getting his serves past the umpire in his
-7. 6. 9. 5 match with tough-minded Rushan Gao. forced Hendry into the
5th. George also beat Eugene Bricker—who. 50 years ago. won the 1954
USA Open Senior Doubles with Bernie Hock. These young-at-heart old
guys—my. how long they insist on being competitive.

Over 60's Play
In the 60's. Stan Sokol upset Fred Halbig in 5. but was no match for
two-time winner Dick Hicks in the semi's. Nor could 2003 National
State Games’ Sportsman of the Year Housshang Bozorgzadeh stop 65-
year-old Horst Werkmann from bashing in flat hits honed in 6th Division
Misha and the USA ITTF Pro Tour
Tough Lesson For Young American
By Larry Hodges & Ian Marshall

The qualification rounds of an ITTF Pro Tour tournament give aspiring young players the opportunity to measure their progress, to play on the big stage, to see the elite of world table tennis in action and to be motivated and aspire to greater heights. The US Open in Chicago is no exception and for Mikhail “Misha” Kazantsev, currently ranked number one in the under 16 boys age category in the USA, it was an opportunity to play on the big stage.

Misha is the US Open Under 18 Boys’ Singles Champion, a member of the US National Junior Team and a young man with international experience — but trying to qualify for the main draw in an ITTF Pro Tour event is a tough task and so it proved for Kazantsev. He beat many-times Mexican champion Francisco Mendez, but lost 0-4 to Denmark’s Martin Monrad.

“The US Junior Team went to the Safir International Tournament in Sweden and it was a great experience being able to play many high level players, which is more difficult to do in the U.S.,” explained Kazantsev. “Afterwards, I stayed there to train in Sweden for three and a half months and just returned a month ago. While I was there, I worked on a lot of things, including footwork and other things but I mainly went there to work on my backhand, which has always been my weakness. I think it has improved a lot.

Under 21: Korean Gets To Grips With Canadian

Moon Hyun Jung of Korea won the Under 21 Women’s Singles title, defeating Canada’s Marie-Christine Roussy in the final. It’s unlikely that the Korean has ever been previously confronted with a player who holds the racket in the manner adopted by the Canadian. She uses the “Seemiller grip,” and for her it works.

Furthermore, it’s possible that many of the international players and coaches present in Chicago have never played nor coached against an opponent with the Seemiller grip; whether that was a fact or not, Canada’s Marie-Christine Roussy romped her way to the final, not losing a single game en route.

In the semifinals, she beat Qian Lian of the Dominican Republic, 2,7,9,8, the latter having ousted the top seed and reigning Japanese Women’s Singles Champion Sayaka Hirano in the quarters in five games. Meanwhile, #2 seed Moon Hyun Jung of Korea had more of a struggle, beating Jackie Lee of the USA, 10,5,3,6,9 in the 8ths before overcoming Whitney Ping, also of the USA, in the quarters and her Korean compatriot, Lee Eun Hee, in the semis.

The final ebbed and flowed, and at two games all, Roussy established a 9-7 lead in the fifth — but lost four points in a row. In the sixth she led 9-3, again lost four points in a row, took a time out, which seemed to help her opponent who promptly tied it at 9-all. Roussy then led 10-9, but failed to convert the opportunity. Moon Hyun Jung won the next three points, the match and the title.

By Larry Hodges & Ian Marshall

“I needed to change direction more,” said Roussy, “but I let her change direction more than I did. It’s risky going to her forehand, that’s where she’s very strong. At 9-3 in the last game, I was not confident and started thinking about the score. I shouldn’t have done that.”

Meanwhile, the Under 21 Men’s Singles title went to Christophe Bertin of France, the victor over Fazil Kassam of Canada. The latter had ended the hopes of top seed Loic Bobillier of France in the semifinals, 13,6,8,10,4, and in the quarters his compatriot Bence Csaba, 9,5,2,2.

The final was a full of exciting topspin play with Bertin gaining the verdict, 8-9,8,6,2,5. “I had to spin to the middle,” said Bertin. “He’s very strong from the corners, I also used my reverse forehand serve well.”

Bertin trains at the national training center in Insep, France, along with the majority of the top French players under the watchful eye of coaches Jean-Claude Decret and Michel Blondel. The victory was sweet revenge for Bertin, one week earlier he had lost to Kassam in the quarterfinals of Under 21 Men’s Singles in Brazil.

Canadians Marie-Christine Roussy and Kassam Fazil made the finals of Under 21 Women and Men, a nice showing for the North Americans.
Junior Events

By Larry Hodges

The only double winner in the junior events was Judy Hugh, who won both Under 18 and Under 15 Girls' Singles, mostly dominating both events. Her only close match was in the semifinals of Under 18, where Laura Leach, fresh from a year of training in Sweden, took her to five before losing, 8-6, 10-8, 4.

There were a number of five-game finals. Elena Mykhaylevskaya (say that five times fast) lost in five in the semifinals of Under 15 Girls (to Atha Fong, 4-11, 10-13, 4), but she pulled out a five-gamer in the Under 13 Girls' final, over Michelle Viteri Salazar of Ecuador, 6-4, 9-6, 6. Under 11 Girls was an even closer five-gamer, as Carelyn Cordero won a squeaker against Christiana Divita, 9-6, 7, 9, 10.

Canada's Guo Peng defeated Misha Kazantsev (Under 2400 finalist) in still another five-gamer, -8, 6, 8, 7, 6, to win Under 18 Boys. But with a triple-five comeback, A.J. Brewer came back to win Under 11 Boys in five against Janel Li, -8, 6, 5, 5.

Jorge Mino Puga didn't go five in winning Under 15 Boys over Bryan Michaud, but the games were mostly close, 9-8, 5, 10. Puga said, "I moved him side to side, and tried to loop the first ball.

Puga, who is from the Salesianos Club in Ecuador, had lost his racket after the semifinals, and played the final with a borrowed racket.

U.S. #1 Under 14 Jeff Huang also didn't go five in winning Under 13 Boys over Michael Mast, 11-2, 10. And Christopher Brewer, not to be outdone by big brother A.J., got a high-five for winning Under 10 over Merrill Huang, 4-2, 7.

In Under 15 Doubles, it was John Leach/ Joseph Cochran over Marcus Jackson/Yahao Zhang, 6, 8, 6, with Leach/Cochran battling back from down 0-2 to win in the semifinals over Judy Hugh/Atha Fong, -8, 2, 6, 9, 5.

In Under 13 Doubles, Manuel Adorno Caraballo/Edgard De Jesus of Puerto Rico edged out A.J. Brewer/Shelby Lane, 10, 3, 8, 10— but only after both teams won five-gamers in the semifinals. Caraballo/De Jesus won over Anders Truelson/Yahao Zhang, 5, 9, 5, 7, 6, while Brewer/Lane won over Amareesh Sahni/Kevin Ma, 9, 8, 5, 9, 8.


Photos ©2004 by Gerry Chua, except for Judy Hugh photo, ©2004 by Mal Anderson
Zoran Kalinic Discovers America
By Alan Williams

In 1976 he won the Junior Boys' Singles title at the European Youth Championships in Austria, beating England's Paul Day in the final; in 2004 he still has the competitive urge having recently played in the World Veterans' Championships in Japan; in the intervening years he became one of Europe's leading players and is now the coach for the Serbian national team; he has a wealth of knowledge; his name: Zoran Kalinic.

He is one of the most distinctive and best remembered players of his era and at six foot five, as a European penholder, why wouldn't he be? However, despite his accomplishments and his fame, Zoran Kalinic's career never brought him to America. Never, that is, until the 2004 USA ITTF Pro Tour.

"The U.S. Open always happened to fall at a rest period for the Yugoslavian Team," Zoran explained, "and as their coach for the past four years, I did not want to upset their training schedule by making that trip. Now, with Athens only weeks away, this is a perfect tune up for Grujic and Karakasevic."

Kalinic, as a player, was best known as a doubles specialist, three times European Doubles Champion and in 1983, World's Men's Doubles Champion in partnership with Dragutin Surbek. The competitive fire still burns for the 46-year-old who was the runner-up to Mikael Appelgren of Sweden in the Over 40 Men's Singles event at the recent World Veterans' Championships in Japan, the same player who beat him in a Team Final back in 1991. "Next time," Kalinic says simply. "Next time."

As a penholder, does Zoran face any particular challenge in coaching today's powerful two-winged shakehand loopers? "Not really," the statuesque legend responds. "Once you understand table tennis, you understand table tennis."

As for having made it to America, particularly Chicago, after all these years, Zoran becomes eloquent. "I have always dreamed of the opportunity to come to America and it has been everything I had hoped. Fantastic! Simply fantastic." So are you, sir, so are you.

Hardbat Events
By Bruce Liu & Larry Hodges

In keeping with the tradition of hardbat, all games were to 21 - but a few unknowing people, seeing the scores, thought that, boy, those hardbatters sure play long deuce games!

In the semifinals of Hardbat Singles, there was a classic matchup of hitter (penholder Lily Yip) versus chopper (Steve Berger, 2000 National Hardbat Champion). The hitter won, 14,10,17. Lily looked like she was well on her way to continuing her three-year dominance of USA hardbat. She's not only the defending champion here, she's won hardbat at the U.S. Open and Nationals for three straight years, except for the 2002 Open. Interestingly, Steve's student, Jake Carter, was yellow-carded for coaching during this match.

The other semifinal was more hotly contested - in more ways than one. Alexis Perez was the 2000 North American Hardbat Champion and a finalist in Hardbat Singles at both the 2003 U.S. Open and Nationals (losing to Yip both times). Ty, of course, at one time dominated hardbat in the U.S., winning five straight U.S. Opens and Nationals from 1998 to 2000 in the days of the 38mm ball. Alexis, however, was unhappy when the umpire asked him to move his arm out of the way and stop stomping his foot when serving - and after battling for three games, he lost the fourth badly as Ty Hoff advanced into the final, 17,-18,16,11. Perez, not happy with the umpiring, broke his racket after the match. And so the scene was set for the current dominant hardbatter - Lily - against the former champ, Ty.

Lily won the first two games rather easily in the final, 21-16. She would serve fast and long, mostly to Ty's backhand, and won many points on the serve outright. She'd mostly follow her serve up with punch blocks to Ty's wide forehand, followed by either a smash or more punch blocks. Ty turned up his attack in the third game and rallied better, and led 20-19 before losing the game and match, 16,16,22. Lily said, "I think he's a little out of practice. His forehand was off today, not as strong as before. When he opened with his backhand, I could block to his forehand."

Steve Berger and Tahl Leibovitz battled their way through the field to the final of hardbat doubles, winning the final - also their first match in this field of two teams - over defending champions Ashu Jain and John Jarema, 19,-13,17. Berger, the defending champion, added Over 40 Hardbat Singles, over Tim Boggan, 6,13, but only after getting past co-author Bruce Liu in the semifinals, 9,17.

In the hardbat rating events, John Oros defeated Kristopher Sabas in Under 2000, 15,18, while defending U.S. Open Under 1500 Champion Berndt Mann continued his dominance of the event, winning out in a final round robin with a 3-0 record, with Richard Jeffers (2-4) coming in second.
Photos by Gerry Chea © 2004

The SPINvitational: Table Tennis For Charity
By Tom Nguyen

At the same time the US Open Table Tennis Championships were taking place, the All England Lawn Tennis Championships were being staged in Wimbledon, South London. The latter is an event steeped in tradition and regarded by many as the most prestigious tennis tournament of them all. The players enter the court to polite applause, there are no announcements, no razzmatazz; it is very British. In the USA the exact opposite is the norm; it is the country where sport is entertainment and innovative ideas are the fore; at the Killerspin Open in Chicago on Wednesday, June 30, table tennis received the American treatment with the SPINvitational event being held, and the crowd loved every minute of the proceedings.

Magic was in the air the second you set foot into the UIC Pavilion. The mixture of the beautiful lights and the melodic rhythm of the music set the mood for the evening’s special events. As the crowd filled the vast stadium seating, you could feel the excitement and anticipation grow. The exposure of high-level table tennis and the exposure of some great charities is what Mr. Robert Blackwell expected for the SPINvitational and with great expectations came great results.

The SPINvitational consisted of world-class players competing for charity. The Boys and Girls Club, America’s Second Harvest and The Belle Center were the lucky charities to receive the proceeds from the special event; each charity was represented by a team of three members battling each other to win the most proceeds for their charity.

The Boys and Girls Club team consisted of Ilija Lupulesku, Kalinikos Kreanga and Zoran Primorac. America’s Second Harvest Team comprised Aleksandar Karakasevic, Kim Tack Soo and Jean-Michel Saive, while representing the Belle Center Team was Johnny Huang, Werner Schlager and Andrei Filimon.

In addition to the team events, two Killerspin Challenge Matches were played. One was a rematch of the last World Championships Men’s Singles Final, between World Champion Werner Schlager of Austria, and the Korean backspin player with a powerful forehand loop, Joo Se Hyuk. The other was between “Biba,” known outside the USA as Bjana Golic, and Mihaela Steff.

Before all the matches began, the crowd was entertained by the Killerspin Dancers. With the music blaring and the dancers pumping up the crowd, I noticed a man talking on his phone excitedly. From his conversation, he seemed to be a non table tennis player. “Man, this is so awesome! It’s better than baseball! You are missing out, get here quick!”

Throughout the evening, the spectators were able to see some amazing play. Jean-Michel Saive turned out to be Mr. Show Business. He raised his hands up and down pumping up the crowd and even pretended to be a cameraman recording the crowd and even though Schlager lost both of his matches, he was able to comment on what he thought of the SPINvitational and the Killerspin US Open so far. “I think it’s great, helping out table tennis and helping out charity and I really enjoy Chicago!”

Another player that the crowd was excited to see was recently retired Korean ace Kim Taek Soo. Even though he is now the coach of the Korean Men’s National Team, he still showed his tremendous skills. I asked him how he felt about moving from being a player to becoming the National coach. “Too many things to do, and stress,” He explained his responsibilities as a coach but I could tell that he is the perfect man for the job.

As the evening concluded, I could tell that this evening was special for many people. For table tennis fans, this was a chance to see some of their favorite players in action; for the sport of table tennis, the exposure to the public made them aware of the beauty of our sport. The most important part, however, was the smiling faces on all the children, who will be receiving the benefits of this great charity event. Thanks to Killerspin for hosting a special event.

Challenge Matches
Mihaela Steff (ROU) d. Biljan Golic (SCG), 5,12,11
Joo Se Hyuk (KOR) d. Werner Schlager (AUT), 5,5,2,8

Exhibition Team Matches
Jean-Michel Saive (BEL) d. Andrei Filimon (ROU), -7,10,4,4
Johnny Huang (CAN) d. Aleksandar Karakasevic (SCG), -9,5,9,7
Kalinikos Kreanga (GRE) d. Joo Se Hyuk (KOR), -7,7,-10,4,5
Johnny Huang (CAN) d. Ilija Lupulesku (USA), -10,3,-7,3,5
Zoran Primorac (HRV) d. Jean-Michel Saive (BEL), 9,5,-4,8,8
Jürgen Persson (SWE) d. Kim Tack Soo (KOR), 6,9,-4,6
Aleksandar Karakasevic (SCG) d. Ilija Lupulesku (USA), -9,6,-8,9,10
Kalinikos Kreanga (GRE) d. Werner Schlager (AUT), 9,10,-5,4
Zoran Primorac (HRV) d. Andrei Filimon (ROU), -4,5,4,11

SPINvitational Standings
1. Boys and Girls Club (Ilija Lupulesku, Kalinikos Kreanga, Zoran Primoric)
2-3. America’s Second Harvest Team (Aleksandar Karakasevic, Kim Tack Soo, Jean-Michel Saive)
2-3. The Belle Center Team (Johnny Huang, Werner Schlager and Andrei Filimon)

Multiple Winners at the U.S. Open/Pro Tour

Triple Winner! ★★★
Richard Hicks Over 60 Men’s Singles & Doubles, Over 50 Doubles

Double Winners! ★★
Ryu Seung Min Men’s Singles & Doubles
Li Vuxiang Over 30 Men’s Singles, Over 40 Men’s Singles
Lily Yip Over 40 Women’s Singles, Hardbat Singles
George Hendry Over 75 Singles, Over 80 Singles
Judy Hugh Under 18 Girls’ Singles, Under 15 Girls’ Singles
A.J. Brewer Under 11 Boys’ Singles, Under 3200 Doubles
Steve Berger Over 40 Hardbat Singles, Hardbat Doubles
Kane Watson Under 2050 Singles, Under 4200 Doubles
In Memoriam: Hikosuke Tamasu
By Tim Boggan, USATT Historian

Hikosuke Tamasu, founder president of the Tamasu Company, long known worldwide for its famous Butterfly products, was visiting Hakone near Tokyo when he suffered heart failure and died on July 22. His was one of the most illustrious names in Table Tennis in the last half-century, and I and the many members of our Association who knew of him, or were fortunate to know him personally, offer our regrets and sympathy to his family.

One can find out much about Hikosuke from his (1993) Songs of International Friendship. It tells of an individual man's journey to make a table tennis life—the long, unique moment captured so perfectly, so universally, in the drawing by Yurika Murata reproduced here. To the ancients, the butterfly was an emblem of the soul—and, drawn by its invisible urges, one tries, like Tamasu, the national player become international businessman, to steer...somewhere...and hold on for dear life.

Swiss psychologist Carl Jung says that traveling is an image of aspiration, and Tamasu aspired to reach a perhaps impossible goal—not just worldly success, which he obviously achieved, but something that was also spiritually satisfying. Implicit in that Murata drawing is the great Navigation Myth—of living to transcend. One sails the hostile sea of one's own worldly desires in an effort to achieve the Great Peace.

In 1945, Tamasu as a young soldier was only two kilometers away when the atomic bomb destroyed Hiroshima. In caring for the injured, he first began to feel the soul-stirring need to become a peacemaker. He named the family business he began in 1946 "Butterfly" because the butterfly was "an image of peace throughout the world.

Hikosuke tells us that he was only one of two Japanese who used rubber in the 1946 All-Japan Championships. He got a British racket from a friend, and, on removing the rubber, regarded it as his "treasure." By 1946 he was making such rubber for himself. After the showing of Butterfly products at the Japan Industrial Exhibition in Peking in 1953, many of the Chinese and Europeans world stars were playing with Butterfly equipment. Tamasu's working relationship with the U.S. Association began at the onset of the 1960's when USTTA President Norman Kilpatrick, appreciating the quality of the Butterfly sponge and pimpled rubber products, had formed with Bowie Martin the Martin-Kilpatrick Co. Thereafter Butterfly was helpful sponsor to many U.S. players.

In Songs Hikosuke tells us some of the problems he had in establishing his business—for example, when the Dutch firm Cor du Buy registered both the name "Tamasu" and the trademark "Butterfly," and Hikosuke, involved in litigation for a decade, was "prevented from selling this brand in Europe.

Naturally Tamasu persevered and became known as an adroit, very practical-minded businessman. But though he was diplomatic, he had his own moral fiber. In speaking anecdotally of a Thai, "a good person," Hikosuke relates how he asked the man's secretary, "a beautiful woman," if the man has "only one wife now" [sic: legally he could have more]. After the secretary sensibly replies, "Mr. Tamasu, you ought to ask him yourself," Tamasu adds, "As I had imagined," this handsome man "divorced his wife soon after that, and married a Thai beauty queen" who " favored us by coming to our anniversary." What anniversary? When! Hikosuke doesn't tell us because it doesn't matter. What matters is the tactical balance of words required in a selection Tamasu, in communicating his psychic self, can't resist including. His moral disapproval came safely out in the next paragraph when he says that the Thailand that "aims to become the industrial center of South-east Asia...is also becoming the center for AIDS."

In the early 1970's the Asian Table Tennis Federation was dissolved in favor of the Asian Union that excluded not only Taiwan but South Korea. This banishment, which Butterfly felt forced to participate in, troubled Tamasu's conscience—so that much of his Songs autobiography (he was said to sing with feeling as many as "seventy Korean ballads") is concerned with trying to mediate a brotherly understanding between Japan and the Koreas, especially South Korea, for the rifts were still there from Japan's annexation of Korea in the early 1900's. Tamasu was also troubled because he felt that young people in Japan "have lost the will to strive" and that neither "the state nor society has any policy to support sports." He thought that many Japanese remain insular in their thinking. In their self-conceit about their exalted position in the Asian world, they regard their particular culture so highly they don't make the necessary accommodations to learn from their Korean neighbors.

This lack of understanding, this conceit—one reason why on the whole the Koreans don't like the Japanese—is self-defeating, as ought to be obvious from how Japan has seened away, South Korea up, in world-class table tennis in the last 20 years.

The passage in Tamasu's Songs I liked best was when, in a fulfilling spirit of camaraderie, some Koreans asked Hikosuke if he could get them a video of Musashi Miyamoto, a master swordsman of old Japan. They wanted to understand where this master was coming from, how he could be so good. Tamasu was much moved by this, and his surprise seemed to bear out the very Japanese insularity he himself was critical of—as if he thought only Japanese would be interested in this master, or, worse, as if he thought that today not even the Japanese would be interested in him.

Tamasu, then, was a man of many parts. One who'd not just drifted on that island-to-island soul-ship of his, but had tried to steer, at some psychic peril, toward what must inevitably have been an unsatisfied spiritual longing: the quest for world peace and international goodwill—with sometimes only a table tennis song book as a map, or hymnal.
Canadian Nationals
Truro, Nova Scotia · July 12-18, 2004

Canadian Men’s Singles, Doubles and Team Champion Pradeeban Peter-Paul

Men’s Singles – Final: Pradeeban Peter-Paul d. Bence Csaba, 11-6, 9-11, 8-11; SF: Peter-Paul d. Xavier Therien, 3-16, 4-11, 6-11; Csaba d. Dennis Su, 8-11, 5-8, 9-7.

Women’s Singles – Final: Zhan Mo d. Judy Long, 8-7, 11-7, 9-11, 11-2, 7-6, 6-7, 6-11; Long d. Wennis Chiu, 8-5, 4-9.

Men’s Doubles – Final: Pradeeban Peter-Paul/ Homayoun Kamkar-Parsi d. Bence Csaba/Sivraj Murarkrishnan, 5-3, 10; SF: Peter-Paul/Kamkar-Parsi d. Pierre-Luc Hinse/Guo Peng, 5-9, 8-10, 6; Csaba/Murarkrishnan d. Therien/Ignacio Cabrera, 8, 7, 7, 7, 8.

Women’s Doubles – Final: Mo Zhang/Judy Long d. Marie-Christine Roussy/Nancy Paulin, 13, 6, 9, 3-4; SF: Petra Cada/Erica Ans & Cynthia Paulin/Marie-Andree Levesque.

Mixed Doubles – Final: Petra Cada/Homayoun Kamkar-Parsi d. Xavier Therien/Marie-Christine Roussy, 12-8, 8, 7, 3-4; Ignacio Cabrera/Lyne Desjardins & Enoch You/Judy Long.

Men’s Teams – Final: Ontario d. Quebec, 3-2, 3rd British Columbia; 4th Saskatchewan.

Women’s Teams – Final: British Columbia d. Ontario, 3-1, 3rd Alberta.

Under 21 Men’s Singles – Final: Guo Peng d. Peter Chiu, 7, 6, 8, 3; SF: Chiu d. Cabrera, 4-7, 7, 2, 5, 9, 6; Guo d. Hinse, 6, 3, 5, 13.

Under 21 Women’s Singles – Final: Zhan Mo d. Wennis Chiu, 6, 8, 6, 8, 9, 8; 3-4: Marie-Christine Roussy & Shirley Yan.

Southern State Teams
Salem, VA · June 6, 2004

By Dean Kapsalakis

The top-seeded team of Hiep Tran (2014) and Dan Barrett (1810) were battling the second-seeded team of Rene Tywang (1898) and 13-year-old Ashwin Peres-da-Silva (1873) in a late-stage match. If Hiep/Dan win, the third-seeded team of Saju Eapen (1885) and Billy Marshall (1824) would win via a tiebreaker. Given the ratings, the crucial match was going to be the doubles match, the third match. Rene and Ashwin were able to beat the top seeds in four games, and won the match and the tournament.

With just six evenly matched teams on three tables, this format proved to be nothing short of excellent. Very little waiting, enough rest between matches, and doubles skills mixed in - so everyone had a great tourney.


2004 MDTTC June Open
Gaithersburg, MD · June 5-6, 2004

By Wei Xiao

In open singles, there were three round robins, with two players advancing from each. In the first round robin, 12-year-old Amaresh Sahu (1850, but now 2024) upset Bonggooy Cruz (2032) 3-0 to force a three-way tie. Sahu advanced second behind Han Xiao (2060). In the second group, Tacky Santelesies (2265), who had not played since 1996, won his group easily, with Raghu Nadmichettu (2048) advancing second over Lixin Lang (2003). In the last round robin, John Wetzler (2324) showed good form in upsetting Nazruddin Asgarali (2251), 3 games to 1. Asgarali advanced second behind Wetzler in this group. In the quarterfinals, both would advance easily over Nadmichettu and Sahu, respectively.

In the semifinals, Asgarali lost two close games to Xiao, 9 and 8, before things got out of hand and Xiao took the next two easily at 4 and 6 to go into the final without dropping a game. The second semifinal was not so much of a walk in the park. Wetzler took the first game over Santelesies, 11-8. However, John’s normally big forehand loop seemed a little too big on this day. He often overlooped the ball as he dropped the next three at 7, 7, and 11. Down 3-1, it seemed as if Wetzler was done. However, in the fifth, Santelesies missed two serves at deuce to hand Wetzler the game. Errors plus fatigue eventually cost Tacky the match. As John gained confidence and completed the comeback, winning the next two games each at 7. Despite this good win, Wetzler seemed to have used all of his energy. Facing a fresh Han Xiao in the final, Wetzler was unable to put up much of a fight, losing at 4, 4, 3, and 4.

MDTTC Open Champion Han Xiao and Finalist John Wetzler

Finalist John Wetzler not only did well in the Open, he also won the U2250 event. Other notables include Lixin Lang, who won the U2100 event and made the final of U2500, where he lost to Wetzler, and Alin Chioveanu, who won the U1500 event, beating Toby Kuter (1123) 3-0 in the finals. Several juniors did well in U1400, U1650 and U1900 event including Charlie Sun (U1900 Champion), Kian Mokhtari (U1650 finalist) and Justin Kun (U1400 finalist)

Open – Final: Han Xiao d. John Wetzler, 4-3, 4, 3, 4; SF: Xiao d. Nazruddin Asgarali, 9-8, 4, 6; Wetzler d. Tacky Santelesies, 8, 7, 7, -11, 11, 7, 7; QF: Asharali d. Raghu Nadmichettu, 8, 5, Wetzler d. Amaresh Sahu, 6, 8, 5.

U2250 – Final: John Wetzler d. Lixin Lang, 10-7, 9-10; SF: Wetzler d. Raghu Nadmichettu, 10, 11, 12, 6; Lang d. Luisito Escobar, 11-3, 7, 4.

U1200 – Final: Lixin Lang d. Raghu Nadmichettu, 10-7, 7, 7; SF: Lang d. Bonggooy Cruz, 10-7, 9-8; Nadmichettu d. Peter Li, 8-9, 5, 5, 4.

U1900: Chi Zhang d. Julian Waters, 7-6, 7, 7.

U1900: 1st Charlie Sun; 2nd Ray Chen; 3rd Kian Mokhtari; 4th Kean Mokhtari.

U1650: Kit Wing Lee d. Kian Mokhtari, 7-3, 5, 6.

U1400: Tai-Chi Shan d. Justin Kung, 7-8, 3, 10.


Queen City Open
Charlotte, NC · June 19, 2004 · By John Pahl

- Cost of travel to Charlotte ................................................. Minimal
- Entry fee, including lunch, drinks & supplements .................. $40
- Competing in a “train wreck” format against 47 other players for over a thousand dollars in prize money ................... Priceless

The format was that as long as you keep winning, it’s single elimination to the championship. Nine tables were put to good use as the bottom 32 played the first match of the day to decide who moves on to face the top 16 and who drops to Class C round robins. Bryan Horton won over John Funk in Class C final after they each won their 8-man RR. Ray Filz and Richard Ison won the Class C single elimination doubles.

The next two single elimination rounds sent the 24 losers into 4 groups of 6, with Amir Amidi winning Class B over Walter Murray. The quarterfinals sent 4 players into the last round robin, with Christophe Aube besting Rodrigo Merida for Class A honors. That left 4 players for the semif. Nigel Christopher won a spot in the final over Ty Hoff, and Didi DeSouza won over Jim McQueen. Ty then beat Jim for third place in a back and forth best of seven.

Hometown favorite Nigel took Atlanta native Didi to six games before giving up the $300 first prize sponsored by Wireway/Husky. Didi actually struggled through some early rounds but dug in and eventually won it all. His higher level of practice showed in his touch and short ball opens, allowing more of his big shots more often. Both exhibited flawless form and explosive power inspiring many to hit the practice tables after the final.

I’m sure the prize money at every level had something to do with an early sellout, as well as the “train wreck” format borrowed from the UK leagues. Thanks to Butterfly for supplying balls and Charlotte Park & Rec for their cooperation. Tournament staff Simon Brain, Ira Goodman and John Pahl hope to see you next time.

USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE · Sept/Oct 2004
Brooklyn April Open
Brooklyn, NY · Apr. 18, 2004
Open – Final: Shao Yu d. Adam Hugh, 11,9,8; SF: Shao d. Li Yuxiang, 9,6,4,5; Hugh d. Tahl Leibovitz, 6,6,3,8,14; QF: Hugh d. De Tran, 11,4,8,7,13; Leibovitz d. Barry Dattel, 11,3,11,7,6; Shao d. Bogdan Kucherenko, 10,8,8; Li d. Dwight King, 9,6,4,5.

Open – Final: Shao Yu d. Adam Hugh, 1 1,9,8.

Brooklyn April Open
Brooklyn, NY · Apr. 18, 2004
Open – Final: Shao Yu d. Adam Hugh, 1 1,9,8.

Brooklyn May Open
Brooklyn, NY · May 30, 2004
Open – Final: Gao Yan Jun d. Michael Oyebode, 4-2; SF: Gao d. Bogdan Kucherenko, 4-2; Oyebode d. Shawn Embleton, 3-1; QF: Gao d. Dwight King, 3-0; Kucherenko d. Mauricio Vergara, 3-1; Embleton d. Paul David, 4-1; Oyebode d. Peter Ng, 3-1.

Brooklyn May Open Semifinalists Bogdan Kucherenko, Runner-up Michael Oyebode, Champion Gao Yan Jun and Shawn Embleton.

Chemeketa Spring Open
Salem, OR · May 8, 2004
Open: 1st Michael Boye Wang; 2nd Chris Solomon; 3rd Tai Nguyen.
Class A: 1st Sam Ignazzitto; 2nd Weida Qian; 3rd Edmundo Lopez.
Class B: 1st Thomas Nguyen; 2nd Steve Ogo; 3rd Bruce Bayley.

Memorial Day Open
Pensacola, FL · May 29, 2004
Open: 1st Willy Leparulo; 2nd Warren McNeil; 3rd Rafael Veliz.
Class A: 1st Johnny Billy; 2nd Igor Kappel; 3rd Herb Bennett.
Class B: 1st Serge Poncin; 2nd John Todd; 3rd Albert Weaver.
Class C: 1st J.J. Jordan; 2nd Joseph Wells; 3rd Pan Zheng.
Class D: 1st Elizabeth Wilkes; 2nd Ray Thrift; 3rd Pedro Veliz.

Ben Hill Stiga Open
Atlanta, Georgia · June 6, 2004
Open: 1st Lee McCook; 2nd Xin Peng; 3rd Keith Evans & Kwaovi Didi DeSouza.
U2200: 1st Thomas Nunes; 2nd Derrick Munnoch; 3rd Bill Mobley.
U1800: 1st Aldis Presley; 2nd Warren Moon.
U1600: 1st Andrew Dyl; 2nd Stone Payton.
U1400: 1st Di Ding; 2nd Keith Peterman.
U1200: 1st Khan Faisal; 2nd Roland Riveno.
U1000: 1st Sean Cox; 2nd Willy Xiao.
U800: 1st Willy Xiao; 2nd Joy Hembre.
U3700 Doubles: 1st Xin Peng/Di Ding; 2nd Keith Evans/Johnese Evans.
Open Over 40: 1st Xin Peng; 2nd Keith Evans; 3rd Ty Hoff.
AAU Under 18: 1st Aldis Presley; 2nd Scott Fuller; 3rd Andre Benton; 4th Laquiny Ellie.
AAU Under 16: 1st Patrick Wolscrock; 2nd Micah Presley; 3rd Derrick Harrison; 4th Nigel Ellis.
AAU Under 14: 1st Liangbo Gong; 2nd Unesh Begle; 3rd Kenneth Hawkins.
AAU Under 12: 1st Prachi Fulay; 2nd Willy Xiao; 3rd Edmund Lee.
AAU Under 10: 1st Christopher Roberts; 2nd Mealoa Anderson; 3rd Nicholas Chen & Brandon Chen.

South Florida U.S. Open
Coral Springs, FL · June 26-27, 2004
Open: 1st Olivier Marmurek; 2nd Keith Alban; 3-4: Brian Pace & Ben Johnson.
U2500: 1st Ben Johnson; 2nd Christopher Marsh.
U2350: 1st Yosmely Vadillo; 2nd Christopher Marsh.
U2200: 1st Kit Jeerapaet; 2nd Jose Duarte.
U2000: 1st Henry Forte; 2nd Abraham Patterson.
U1850: 1st Wesley Gracves; 2nd Gao Lehnejmaj.
U1625: 1st Sam Phan; 2nd Thein Win.
U1525: 1st Frank Castillo; 2nd Wayne Powell.
U1350: 1st Malcolm Austin; 2nd Barbara Ruggjo.
U1125: 1st Wade Moss; 2nd Kelly Huang.

Inaugural Spring Broward Open
Broward County, FL · May 23, 2004
Open: 1st Paul David; 2nd Keith Alban; 3rd Ben Johnson; 4th Yandi Bueno.
U2200: 1st Raynond Liang; 2nd Jose Duarte; 3rd Kit Jeerapaet; 4th Patrick Anderson.
U2075: 1st Aditya Narwab; 2nd Abraham Patterson; 3rd Joel Reyes; 4th Delroy Thompson.
U1950: 1st Osniel Garcia; 2nd Justin Thomas.
U1825: 1st Osniel Garcia; 2nd Robert Ashmeade.
U1700: 1st Thein Win; 2nd Ebrahim Aly.
U1575: 1st Thomas Chaile; 2nd Bardin Spranger.
U1450: 1st Jorge Ramirez; 2nd Ted Yeung.
U1325: 1st Archie Alfords; 2nd Barbara Ruggio.
U1200: 1st Antonio Bruno; 2nd Malcolm Austin.

Rose City Open
Portland, OR · June 13, 2004
Open: 1st Ludovic Gombos; 2nd Whitney Pinge.
GIant RR: 1st Ludovic Gombos; 2nd Simone Yang.
Open Doubles: 1st Jasna Reed/Whitney Pinge; 2nd Ludovic Gombos/Simone Yang.
U2250: 1st Simone Yang; 2nd David Chung.
U2000: 1st Tai Nguyen; 2nd Roger Castle.
U1800: 1st Reseoe Lock; 2nd Man Yan.
U1600: 1st Zhongkai Xue; 2nd Mark Kobernick.
U1400: 1st Lee Wertheimer; 2nd Tony Vasquez.
U1200: 1st Mengin Su; 2nd Steve Lamb.
U1000: 1st Mengin Su; 2nd Casey Wilson.
Over 40: 1st Simone Yang; 2nd Tai Nguyen.
Under 19: 1st Bo Liu; 2nd Nick Megert; 3rd Jason Polen.
U3000 Doubles: 1st W. Qu/Zongkai Xu; 2nd Steve Ogo/Bob Mahler.

Ben Hill Stiga Open
Atlanta, Georgia · June 6, 2004
Open: 1st Lee McCook; 2nd Xin Peng; 3rd Keith Evans & Kwaovi Didi DeSouza.
U2200: 1st Thomas Nunes; 2nd Derrick Munnoch; 3rd Bill Mobley.
U1800: 1st Aldis Presley; 2nd Warren Moon.
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U1200: 1st Khan Faisal; 2nd Roland Riveno.
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AAU Under 12: 1st Prachi Fulay; 2nd Willy Xiao; 3rd Edmund Lee.
AAU Under 10: 1st Christopher Roberts; 2nd Mealoa Anderson; 3rd Nicholas Chen & Brandon Chen.

Ben Hill Stiga Open
Atlanta, Georgia · June 6, 2004
Open: 1st Willy Leparulo; 2nd Warren McNeil; 3rd Rafael Veliz.
Class A: 1st Johnny Billy; 2nd Igor Kappel; 3rd Herb Bennett.
Class B: 1st Serge Poncin; 2nd John Todd; 3rd Albert Weaver.
Class C: 1st J.J. Jordan; 2nd Joseph Wells; 3rd Pan Zheng.
Class D: 1st Elizabeth Wilkes; 2nd Ray Thrift; 3rd Pedro Veliz.
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be an Olympic Eligible USATT member and have played in the past year to be on the list.

TOP OLYMPIC ELIGIBLE MEN
1. IL 2793 Lupulesku, Ilija
2. NJ 2703 Zhuang, David
3. CA 2595 Reed, Barney J.
4. CA 2674 Nguyen, Khoa Dinh
5. CA 2596 Reed, Barney J.
6. IN 2586 Hazinski, Mark
7. TX 2577 Owens, Eric
8. NY 2571 Tran, De
9. MD 2545 Xiao, Han
10. MD 2529 Sweeris, Todd
11. MD 2526 Huang, Tong Sheng Jack
12. NY 2561 Musa, Atanda
13. CA 2597 Cheng, Yinghua
14. CA 2595 Reed, Barney J.
15. NY 2571 Zhuang, David
16. NY 2571 Zhuang, David
17. TX 2577 Owens, Eric
18. CA 2541 Liu, Nan
19. MD 2526 Huang, Tong Sheng Jack
20. CA 2541 Liu, Nan
21. CA 2529 Sweeris, Todd
22. CA 2529 Sweeris, Todd
23. CA 2529 Sweeris, Todd
24. CA 2529 Sweeris, Todd
25. CA 2529 Sweeris, Todd

TOP OLYMPIC ELIGIBLE WOMEN
1. IL 2793 Lupulesku, Ilija
2. NJ 2703 Zhuang, David
3. CA 2595 Reed, Barney J.
4. CA 2674 Nguyen, Khoa Dinh
5. CA 2596 Reed, Barney J.
6. IN 2586 Hazinski, Mark
7. TX 2577 Owens, Eric
8. NY 2571 Tran, De
9. MD 2545 Xiao, Han
10. MD 2529 Sweeris, Todd
11. MD 2526 Huang, Tong Sheng Jack
12. TX 2571 Rop, Darko
13. IN 2490 Smeilner, Daniel
14. PA 2490 Cretu, Razvan
15. NY 2485 David, Paul
16. CA 2465 Banh, Tawny
17. NY 2441 Yip, Lily
18. CA 2465 Banh, Tawny
19. MD 2441 Yip, Lily
20. CA 2441 Yip, Lily
21. CA 2441 Yip, Lily
22. CA 2441 Yip, Lily
23. CA 2441 Yip, Lily
24. CA 2441 Yip, Lily
25. CA 2441 Yip, Lily

If you believe you should be on the Olympic Eligible list, contact Tommy Perkins at USATT, 719-866-4583, programs@usatt.org. You must be an Olympic Eligible USATT member and have played in the past year to be on the list.

Tournaments Processed
This list was compiled on 08/06/04 (ages are as of that date) and includes all tournaments received through 07/25/04. Due to space limitations, only current members who have played since 04/01/04 are included. This document may not be reproduced without prior written permission of USA Table Tennis. Copyright 2004.

New Tournaments Included in Ratings
Show Me State Games
Central FL Summer Giant RR 2004
Maryland Giant RR
Sportsfest Vll Singles & Dbls Open
Georgia Games
Cary Open Giant RR Jamboree
2004 Ohio Closed Championships
Prof. Angelicus-M Onasanya Inaugural
Maryland Circuit
Piedmont TT Open
US Open

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</table>

The table above lists the top 10 players ranked in California for the year 2004 based on the USATT rankings. The rankings are based on a variety of factors including tournament results, match wins, and other performance metrics. Each player's name, club, and year of birth are included for reference.
<p>| Technique with European Champion Strokes | CA 780 CA 1283 CA 1690 CA 1823 CA 2233 CA 2464 CA 2993 CA 3183 CA 3684 CA 5943 CA 6833 CA 9333 CA 1216 CA 1305 CA 1527 CA 1581 CA 1659 CA 1671 CA 1789 CA 1926 CA 1991 CA 2001 CA 2043 CA 2073 CA 2101 CA 2151 CA 2181 CA 2216 CA 2227 CA 2246 CA 2276 CA 2305 CA 2343 CA 2390 CA 2420 CA 2450 CA 2480 CA 2510 CA 2540 CA 2570 CA 2600 CA 2630 CA 2660 CA 2690 CA 2720 CA 2750 CA 2780 CA 2810 CA 2840 CA 2870 CA 2900 CA 2930 CA 2960 CA 2990 CA 3020 CA 3050 CA 3080 CA 3110 CA 3140 CA 3170 CA 3200 CA 3230 CA 3260 CA 3290 CA 3320 CA 3350 CA 3380 CA 3410 CA 3440 CA 3470 CA 3500 CA 3530 CA 3560 CA 3590 CA 3620 CA 3650 CA 3680 CA 3710 CA 3740 CA 3770 CA 3800 CA 3830 CA 3860 CA 3890 CA 3920 CA 3950 CA 3980 CA 4010 CA 4040 CA 4070 CA 4100 CA 4130 CA 4160 CA 4190 CA 4220 CA 4250 CA 4280 CA 4310 CA 4340 CA 4370 CA 4400 CA 4430 CA 4460 CA 4490 CA 4520 CA 4550 CA 4580 CA 4610 CA 4640 CA 4670 CA 4700 CA 4730 CA 4760 CA 4790 CA 4820 CA 4850 CA 4880 CA 4910 CA 4940 CA 4970 CA 5000 CA 5030 CA 5060 CA 5090 CA 5120 CA 5150 CA 5180 CA 5210 CA 5240 CA 5270 CA 5300 CA 5330 CA 5360 CA 5390 CA 5420 CA 5450 CA 5480 CA 5510 CA 5540 CA 5570 CA 5600 CA 5630 CA 5660 CA 5690 CA 5720 CA 5750 CA 5780 CA 5810 CA 5840 CA 5870 CA 5900 CA 5930 CA 5960 CA 5990 CA 6020 CA 6050 CA 6080 CA 6110 CA 6140 CA 6170 CA 6200 CA 6230 CA 6260 CA 6290 CA 6320 CA 6350 CA 6380 CA 6410 CA 6440 CA 6470 CA 6500 CA 6530 CA 6560 CA 6590 CA 6620 CA 6650 CA 6680 CA 6710 CA 6740 CA 6770 CA 6800 CA 6830 CA 6860 CA 6890 CA 6920 CA 6950 CA 6980 CA 7010 CA 7040 CA 7070 CA 7100 CA 7130 CA 7160 CA 7190 CA 7220 CA 7250 CA 7280 CA 7310 CA 7340 CA 7370 CA 7400 CA 7430 CA 7460 CA 7490 CA 7520 CA 7550 CA 7580 CA 7610 CA 7640 CA 7670 CA 7700 CA 7730 CA 7760 CA 7790 CA 7820 CA 7850 CA 7880 CA 7910 CA 7940 CA 7970 CA 8000 CA 8030 CA 8060 CA 8090 CA 8120 CA 8150 CA 8180 CA 8210 CA 8240 CA 8270 CA 8300 CA 8330 CA 8360 CA 8390 CA 8420 CA 8450 CA 8480 CA 8510 CA 8540 CA 8570 CA 8600 CA 8630 CA 8660 CA 8690 CA 8720 CA 8750 CA 8780 CA 8810 CA 8840 CA 8870 CA 8900 CA 8930 CA 8960 CA 8990 CA 9020 CA 9050 CA 9080 CA 9110 CA 9140 CA 9170 CA 9200 CA 9230 CA 9260 CA 9290 CA 9320 CA 9350 CA 9380 CA 9410 CA 9440 CA 9470 CA 9500 CA 9530 CA 9560 CA 9590 CA 9620 CA 9650 CA 9680 CA 9710 CA 9740 CA 9770 CA 9800 CA 9830 CA 9860 CA 9890 CA 9920 CA 9950 CA 9980 |</p>
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<td>Greensboro, NC</td>
<td>Douglas A. Paul</td>
<td>910-769-3222</td>
<td><a href="mailto:pingpong@aol.com">pingpong@aol.com</a></td>
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<td>3rd CCB Cup</td>
<td>New York, NY</td>
<td>Lily Yip</td>
<td>732-748-9712</td>
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<td>James A. McQueen Jr.</td>
<td>919-787-3788</td>
<td>jmcequeenит@ncrr.com</td>
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<td>5th Annual</td>
<td>Willoughby Hills Giant RR</td>
<td>Ronald J. Arcaro</td>
<td>440-585-9625</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rjare@rocketmail.com">rjare@rocketmail.com</a></td>
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<td>Greensboro, NC</td>
<td>Douglas A. Paul</td>
<td>910-769-3222</td>
<td><a href="mailto:pingpong54@aol.com">pingpong54@aol.com</a></td>
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<td>October 3-4</td>
<td>NATT October at NYTTF</td>
<td>North American Table Tennis</td>
<td>Mark Thompson</td>
<td>859-781-5050</td>
<td><a href="mailto:gtnotes@hotmail.com">gtnotes@hotmail.com</a></td>
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<td>October 3-4</td>
<td>Maryland Circuit</td>
<td>Eldersburg, MD</td>
<td>Yvonne M. Kronlage</td>
<td>410-489-7291</td>
<td><a href="mailto:info@natabletennis.com">info@natabletennis.com</a></td>
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<td>October 4-8</td>
<td>Huntsman World Senior Games, St. George UT</td>
<td>Grant Mischak</td>
<td>801-373-8009</td>
<td><a href="mailto:grant@mischak.org">grant@mischak.org</a></td>
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<td>October 9</td>
<td>Rochester Open</td>
<td>Rochester, NY</td>
<td>Jeff H. Koch</td>
<td>585-964-7243</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mjrkoch@aol.com">mjrkoch@aol.com</a></td>
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<td>October 9-10</td>
<td>19th Annual Bernard Hock Open</td>
<td>New Albany, IN</td>
<td>Jeff Smith</td>
<td>812-929-1433</td>
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<td>SoCal Open</td>
<td>San Diego, CA</td>
<td>North American Table Tennis</td>
<td>301-738-8250</td>
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<td>Colorado Springs Open</td>
<td>Colorado Springs, CO</td>
<td>Larry Rose</td>
<td>719-964-4521</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lrose@dragon.net">lrose@dragon.net</a></td>
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<td>MDTTC Fall Open</td>
<td>Gaithersbur, MD</td>
<td>Wei Xiao</td>
<td>301-916-4862</td>
<td><a href="mailto:wexia24@hotmail.com">wexia24@hotmail.com</a></td>
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<td>Highland Open</td>
<td>Highland, IN</td>
<td>Daniel R. Seemiller</td>
<td>574-654-7476</td>
<td><a href="mailto:vseemiller@earthlink.net">vseemiller@earthlink.net</a></td>
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<td>Power Pong Open</td>
<td>Fountain Valley, CA</td>
<td>Vi Bloom</td>
<td>562-430-9026</td>
<td><a href="mailto:halbloomin@dslextreme.com">halbloomin@dslextreme.com</a></td>
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<td>Tri-Cities Fall Open Double RR</td>
<td>Richland, WA</td>
<td>William Cheung</td>
<td>509-375-0785</td>
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<td>Apex, NC</td>
<td>James A. McQueen Jr.</td>
<td>919-787-3788</td>
<td>jmcequeenит@ncrr.com</td>
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<td>October 23-24</td>
<td>2004 Millcreek</td>
<td>Erie, PA</td>
<td>Samuel L. Steiner</td>
<td>814-833-8704</td>
<td><a href="mailto:samsteiner@compserve.com">samsteiner@compserve.com</a></td>
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<td>Concord Cup Youth TT Tournament</td>
<td>Pleasant Hill, CA</td>
<td>Mike Hendry</td>
<td>512-635-7942</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mvsmith@ix.net.com">mvsmith@ix.net.com</a></td>
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<td>336-769-3222</td>
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<td>High Desert Open</td>
<td>Victorville, CA</td>
<td>Blake Hoard</td>
<td>760-962-8846</td>
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<td>NATT October Open at NYTTF</td>
<td>North American Table Tennis</td>
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<td>Virginia Open</td>
<td>Harry Sands</td>
<td>304-776-6378</td>
<td>sandscastle@yahoocom</td>
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<td>Viducich Stiga Pacific Rim Open</td>
<td>Portland, OR</td>
<td>James H. Scott</td>
<td>503-261-0672</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jscore@laporteinsurance.com">jscore@laporteinsurance.com</a></td>
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<td>James A. McQueen Jr.</td>
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<td>jmcequeenит@ncrr.com</td>
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<td>Highland Giant Round Robin</td>
<td>Highland, IN</td>
<td>Keith Jones</td>
<td>219-838-0114</td>
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<td>Yvonne M. Kronlage</td>
<td>410-489-7291</td>
<td><a href="mailto:info@natabletennis.com">info@natabletennis.com</a></td>
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**USA Table Tennis Magazine • Sept/Oct 2004**
The 30th Golden State Open featured plenty of hot table tennis action. The two-day tournament was held for the 11th year at the Northgate High School gym in Walnut Creek. Entries exceeded 220 players for the third consecutive year. Visitors from Germany brought an international element to the competition, and the large number of San Francisco Bay Area clubs provided a crop of skilled and intent competitors.

Saturday was a frustrating day, lasting until 10:30 p.m. Many of the day’s 10 round-robin events were quite large, capped by the Under 1700’s 66 players. A logistical nightmare soon developed, since only 16 tables were available. For future events Tournament Director Mark Copeland will seek a larger venue (allowing more tables), consider capping RR events at 36 players for 16 tables or 48 if 24 tables are available, and improve operating efficiencies.

The tournament’s Saturday event format was preliminary round robin, followed by single elimination. Most of Sunday’s events were single elimination. The Open event was conducted in the Golden State Open Tournament’s customary format in that single elimination rounds are played through the quarters, and then converted to an exciting four-person round robin featuring the semifinalists.

One match on Saturday drew a crowd of vocal spectators. USATT Certified National Coach Bill Lui offered his commentary on the contest between Ariel Hsing and Brian Louie:

“Another very exciting and unexpectedly entertaining match was between 8-year-old Ariel Hsing from Palo Alto and 13-year-old Brian Louie from Concord. Ariel, the #1 ranked under 10 girl in the country, is an 1122 rated hitter (even though she could just barely see over the table) and Brian is an underrated 797 looper/chopper (block and chop with inverted on the forehand and long pips on the backhand, loop forehand when given a chance) a la reigning World Championship Singles runner-up Joo Se Hyuk of Korea.

“It was a close 5-gamer with hotly contested points cheered on by relatives, club members/coaches, and the general audience. It was the patience and variation of shots by Brian against the single minded (and decisive) attacking of Ariel that made for a most dramatic match.
At the end either player could have won but Brian had a fair lead early, withstood a frantic comeback and did manage to win. After the fifth, I was there until about 7:30 pm Saturday and I believe that was the match that drew the most attention of the day.

With a much smaller entry list and a single-elimination format, Sunday events ran on schedule throughout the day. Spectators were treated to plenty of exciting action while the higher rated events were played. The Open final saw the two German pros, Stefan Feth and Ondrej Kunz, in a four-way round robin with Concord’s Freddie Gabriel and Palo Alto’s Kevin Au. The two local players were unable to make an impression on the Germans, with Feth (2681 USATT Rating) taking the $500 top spot with his countryman Kunz the runner-up. Freddie took third place and Kevin fourth.

Several people commented on the quality of 2000 Golden State Open winner Freddie Gabriel’s play in light of his long layoff and brief period of practice before the tournament. Coach Bill Liu expressed the opinion that Freddie “has a great shot at making the Olympics in 2008” if he chooses to pursue that goal. Two players took first place trophies in more than one event, with the Concord Club’s Trevor Runyan capturing both Under 2150 and Juniors Under 18 while the ageless Peter Chen came on top in Over 50 and Over 60.

Open: 1st Stefan Feth; 2nd Ondrej Kunz; 3-4: Freddie Gabriel & Kevin Au.
Open Doubles: 1st Ondrej Kunz/Auria Malek; 2nd Stefan Feth/Jackie Lee; 3-4: Bruce Liu/Ming Zhang & Steve Nguyen/Kevin Au.
Women: 1st Jackie Lee; 2nd Katie Poon; 3-4: Colleen Lee & Jessica Yick.
Over 50: 1st Peter Chen; 2nd Michael Greene; 3-4: Ted Chen & Massoud Dehdashiri.
Over 60: 1st Peter Chen; 2nd Hongzi Chen; 3-4: Toon Siong Mao & Jianshen Chen.
Over 70: 1st Weiqing Luo; 2nd Carlos Ortega; 3-4: Richard Olson & Herbert Rossman.
Under 18: 1st Trevor Runyan; 2nd Kevin Phung; 3-4: Mukhbbilg Enebish & Sean C. Lee.
Under 12: 1st Justin Htagu; 2nd Shin Ikuno; 3-4: Sylvan Guo & Kevin Lin.
U2450: 1st Yong Ren; 2nd Kevin Au; 3-4: Steve Nguyen & Auria Malek.
U2300: 1st Steve Nguyễn; 2nd Yong Ren; 3-4: Trevor Runyan & Terry Tan.
U2150: 1st Trevor Runyan; 2nd Quan Huynh; 3-4: Bunny Lee & Thinh Mac.
U1850: 1st David Samuelsen; 2nd Aron Banerjee.
U1700: 1st Kent Leung; 2nd Gan-Wah Lee.
U1500: 1st Yuri Kretov; 2nd Jim Cembura.
U1350: 1st Jgannath Bodapatla; 2nd David Hanson.
U1100: 1st Maria G. Rojas; 2nd Mingxia Chang.
U800: 1st Tomas Fuentes-Afflick; 2nd Brian Louie.
U500: 1st Addison Cheng; 2nd Tedd Tollivoro.
U3400 Doubles: 1st Tom Li/Valentine Tai; 2nd David Smith/Kent Leung.
U2800 Doubles: 1st Carrie Huang/Mark Johnson; 2nd Jim Cembura/David Henry.

**Best of the West Open**

Phoenix, AZ • June 12-13, 2004

By Wayne Johnson

**Best of the West Champion Derrick Cone and Finalist Semen Potaychuk**

Players from 5 states came to Phoenix to see some great table tennis action! There were very competitive matches all along which ended with the best Open Singles final in years. Prior to the tournament Derrick Cone, rated 2006, commented that every time he has played Semen Potaychuk from Tucson, AZ that the matches have been closer and closer but he has not yet been able to beat him. As it worked out, Derrick had another chance in the Open Singles final to try again. The match started out with Semen taking game one, 11-9, but with Derrick playing well. Derrick took the edge by winning the next two games at 9 and 2. It was starting to look like this might be his day, finally! Semen came back, however, and won two of the next three games to force a game seven. It was starting to look like Semen had figured out Derrick and was ready to take the title. Derrick had other plans though! Derrick started out very strong and took a 9-3 lead. You could see Derrick starting to smile with only 2 points to go! If Derrick could win those 2 points it would be his first Open Singles win but Semen called time out to regroup. And regroup he did! Semen came back strong to take a 10-9 lead! Derrick then played his point of the tournament to get it to deuce! Ah, another chance for Derrick! Derrick was finally able to pull out game seven and win, 15-13!

**Open**: Derrick Cone d. Semen Potaychuk, 9-2, 10-6, 7-13; **SF**: Cone d. Luis Houed, 6-9, 8-7, 9-4; Potaychuk d. Mitsuhi Nakada, 8-4, 6, 8, 4.

**Open Doubles**: 1st Luis Houed/Mitsuhi Nakada; 2nd Alex Lai/Mankit Ma.

**Over 60**: 1st Chong Lee Cheng 2nd Franz Schauer

**Over 70**: 1st Bill Cantor 2nd Scott Williams

**Over 80**: 1st Joe Pierotti; 2nd Lin Lu, 7-5, 9-10, 4.

**Family Doubles**: 1st Mitsuhi Nakada/Satoko Nakada 2nd Dan Bryan/Danny Bryan 3rd Lin Lu

**Draw Doubles**: Marshall Carman/Bernard Savitz d. Alex Chernobelsky/Tim Wright.

**Dayton Open Champion Don Hamilton**

Dayton Open Champion Don Hamilton

The annual spring Dayton Open was held on April 3, 2004 at the City of Dayton’s Lohrey Recreation Center. The Lohrey Center is an excellent facility housing an indoor swimming pool, snack bar and a full size gymnasium with excellent lighting and grandstand seating. Eight Butterfly tables with partially-barriered enclosures were set up in the gym. The giant round-robin format divided the 55 participants into 6 groups based on their ratings. The one-day and lots-of-play event was divided into morning and afternoon sessions. Between the two sessions, a free handicap fun event using a 44mm ball was offered for interested players. Our thanks to the City of Dayton as well as to our sponsor, Butterfly who provided the tournament balls. The winner of the Top A group was Don Hamilton of Dayton, who bested Scott Endicott of Flint, Michigan in a head-to-head tie break. Nick Snider of Cincinnati finished third. In Group D, the top three spots were decided in a 3-way tie breaker. The match points, matches won/lost and games won/lost were the same and it came down to points won and lost to determine the order of finish.

**Group A**: 1st Don Hamilton; 2nd Scott Endicott; 3rd Nick Snider.

**Group B**: 1st Larry Hawkins Sr.; 2nd Mark Weber; 3rd Aleks Brodkin.

**Group C**: 1st Jan Lie; 2nd Aron Banerjee; 3rd Persman Shanm

**Group D**: 1st Robert Moore; 2nd Jeff Baker; 3rd Simon Waldron.

**Group E**: 1st Mike Lecture; 2nd Soren Tannenhall; 3rd Ron Joseph.

**Group F**: 1st Cliff Leighty; 2nd Aron Frank; 3rd Phil Kolb.

**Big Ball Handicap**: 1st Aron Frank; 2nd Barbara Curtis.
The second stop on the 2004 STIGA North American Tour was an outstanding tournament in every aspect, one of the very best I’ve ever attended. Held at the Carpenter Sports Building at the University of Delaware, the operation was flawless, not surprising given NATT’s six years experience in running these mobile four-star events. But it was the players and their attitudes and performances that made this tournament truly memorable. Courage and fearlessness were on display throughout the weekend, and the STIGA Open climaxed with one of the most dramatic finishes I’ve ever seen, one that those who witnessed it are not likely to forget anytime soon!

Table Tennis Pioneers, the long-time sponsors of the North American Tour, were on hand as vendors and saw a steady stream of enthusiasts at their booth. Terry Bell acted as Tournament Referee, with Fong Hsu as Tournament Director and Richard Lee as Tournament President. Wendy Troy handled the Registration desk with her usual grace, leaving myself with the lighter tasks of making announcements, handing out match slips and observing a few hundred people have a great time playing the sport they love.

Few families have had more fun than the Friend’s, a five-person entry that were high profile in Delaware both for their enthusiasm and for their results! When the weekend ended, Mackenzie Friend, Todd Friend, Spencer Friend and Chance Friend had each earned trophies, but mother Cheryl, while earning no hardware, had shown the most courage. “I did not intend to play the Women’s Singles,” she informed me, “but the kids signed me up!” A 400 level recreational player, she did not shy away from her match with the current U.S. #1 rated woman, Wang Chen, who, ever gracious, managed to win without patronizing or punishing her inexperienced opponent.

It was a delight to see the return of Martin Theil. Martin had been far less happy last summer when a dispute over his one-color hardbat racket had apparently ruined his appetite for organized play. But, all that behind him, he chose to compete again, and compete he did! Martin not only won the Over 60 Singles and the Under 1700 event, he played in the very first expedite match to ever occur at an NATT tour stop!

Richard DeWitt is a frequent participant at NATT tournaments. The multi-lingual DeWitt will talk table tennis with anyone, anytime. Modest to a fault, I’ve heard Richard often deprecate his own chances in the events. He’s one of those people, and I’m sure you know people of similar personality, who never seem to give themselves adequate credit. “Gee, I’m playing awful!” he said more than once, especially after a straight game loss to Vukman Soskic in Open Singles and a tough loss to the fast-rising junior, Joseph Wang. Now how can that Richard’s fault, given that Soskic made the second stage RR of the Open and won the Under 2125? Or that Joseph Wang has been harvesting the rating points of veteran players for several years now? Yet Richard seemed to be actually surprised to get past Patrick Mualem and then Nigel Webb to win the Under 2375 title! Maybe it’s time to acknowledge, Richard, that you actually play pretty well?

John Wetzler, Vukman Soskic, Khaled Asgarali and Patrick Mualem are four guys who “play pretty well” and showed it by making the second stage round robin of Open Singles, where some very scary opponents lay in wait. As if having the likes of Michael Oyebode, Barney J. Reed, Han Xiao, Razvan Cretu and David Zhuang to contend with was not enough, there was also the two-time defending STIGA Open Champion Thomas Keinath, the German Nationals semifinalist, and, in his first US appearance, a second Bundesliga veteran, Gao Yan Jun (pronounced “Yoon-G”) were also waiting to crush, disarm and dismantle their opposition. It was going to take plenty of courage to run this gauntlet.

Open Singles
Group One: Thomas Keinath, Razvan Cretu, Paul David, Khaled Asgarali
Paul David is a versatile and determined player, and showed that Keinath (Ki-NEW!) is not invincible when he nicked the defending champ for a game, but lost the match, 7,4,9,3. Keinath takes no chances, never toys with any opponent, and plays out all on each point. It showed in his defeat of the U.S. junior, Asgarali, 7,4,7. When David took the table against Razvan, he knew this match would be crucial as only the top two from each group could continue to the Quarterfinals. Taking the first game, 11-8, he served notice that he was afraid of no one. But Razvan has too many tools, and once he found his backhand loop, there was nowhere for Paul to go. Cretu wins, 8,6,7,9,2. Now only Soskic can stop Razvan from advancing, and he challenges Cretu to a power game. With both players frequently serving long and fast, he doesn’t have enough, although each game is close, 8,8,9,8. “I felt that once I was past Razvan’s serve, I was in every point,” Khaled said after the match. “But his service game is much more advanced than mine!” With the advancing players determined, Paul defaulted to Keinath, and Razvan decided to give Keinath the #1 position by default. Not a bad strategy, since Razvan would now be automatically placed in the opposite bracket of the Quarters from the Top Seed.

Group Two: David Zhuang, Tahl Leibovitz, Keith Evans, Vukman Soskic
Only Evans (14-12) manages to capture a game from the four-time U.S. Singles Champion, and David cruises to the #1 spot and a Quarterfinal on Sunday. Tahl Leibovitz defeats the game Soskic, 6,7,9,2, with soft blocks and flip returns of serve. Now he must get past Keith Evans. The veteran yields nothing to the local favorite, but Tahl, with Sean O’Neill coaching, manages to overcome a 2-1 deficit to triumph, 5,9,6,9,6,2! Keith saves himself for his over 40 final by defaulting to Soskic (he was having leg problems) and the group is set.

Group Three: Barney Reed, Michael Oyebode, De Tran, John Wetzler
Despite making a last minute entry, De Tran is unable to attend, and defaults his matches. Now three will compete for two spots as everyone begins 1-0. John Wetzler makes the most of every opportunity against top players, and has several wins in his career to show for it, but against Oyebode, there is no such result. Mike is quick, way too quick. He plays a fast, up-tempo, off-the boinice attacking game, and has several wins in his career to show for it, but against Oyebode, there is no such result. Mike is quick, way too quick. He plays a fast, at-the-table, off-the-bounce attacking game, and John’s third ball attacks whistle straight back at him. Switching tactics, John tries playing the short game with longipped blocking, but Mike covers too much ground for John to exploit the angles. Oyebode prevails, 5,7,3,2,5,7.

Reed is also too much for John today, and Oyebode and Reed are guaranteed advancers. But there’s no “gentleman’s agreement” in this group, as Oyebode and Reed wage a real war to see who gets the top spot. 12-10, Oyebode, 11-9, Reed. 12-10, Reed. 11-6, Oyebode. 11-8 Oyebode and the pressure is on Barney. He
even the match, 11-6. It’s all about pride, it’s all about courage, and at deuce in the seventh game, it’s Oyebode who has the mental toughness today, as he wins a great match, 12-10.

**Group Four: Han Xiao, Gao Yan Jun, Nigel Webb, Patrick Mualem**

For Han, the time has come to deliver on the promise. No longer a “fast-rising junior” but instead a member of the U.S. Men’s Team and a college freshman next fall, he now comes to competition as the favorite, rather than the underdog. Neither Mualem (12,6,7,7) nor Webb (8,9,4,9) can deal him a setback and he’s ensured to advance. Gao, given an estimated rating of 2600, also defeats Mualem (4,5,8,8) and Webb (8,9,7,7,7). Pat salvages pride (and a few rating points!) when he takes the #3 spot with a crowd-pleasing win against Nigel, -7,8,9,-7,9,6.6. Courageous play when trailing 3-2 carries the day! For Han, against Gao, the hole is deeper, as the Bundesliga veteran surges out in front, three games to one! But Han shows that he has arrived, is ready, as, consulting with Paul David between games, he aggressively carries the war to the right-handed Gao and wins! (-6,8,-9,5,6,8,6). Gao wonders where this new tiger has come from, and now only eight players remain to compete for the $2,000 first place prize.

**Quarterfinals**

**David Zhuang vs. Barney Reed**

Delaware can’t be David’s favorite place, as it was here two years ago that he lost a Semifinal to Keinath after holding a two-point lead in the final game. Additional grit for the mental mill, only two months ago Barney upset David in the semis at the Quaker City Open in Philadelphia. Would this rematch establish a new pecking order? Give David yet another unpleasant Newark memory? It apparently never enters his mind as a possibility, as he takes out Barney in four straight games, 7,9,7 and 7. Barney does not look as fresh and energetic as he did in Philly, and it shows in the result, as he can’t mount a sustained attack on David’s blocking game.

**Thomas Keinath vs. Tahl Leibovitz**

Tahl demonstrates amazing courage every time he plays; given the myriad of physical ailments he battles. But even the able-bodied will before Keinath’s complete mastery of table tennis. It takes less than 20 minutes to play this match, as despite Tahl’s best effort (and some amazing around-the-net post loops) Keinath wins 4,6,6,4. By the fourth game, Tahl is visibly resigned and that doesn’t happen often. Thomas is looking for a good third title!

**Michael Oyebode vs. Gao Yan Jun**

Gao can never really get going against the speedy Oyebode, whose off-the-bounce play hinders even the best players. Mike exploits every opening, often going down the lines with his attack, and wins in straight games, 8,8,7.9. Mike certainly looks like a champion with this win, and his Semi will be with Keinath. Does he have enough?

**Han Xiao vs. Razvan Cretu**

Has Han ever defeated Razvan in the past? No one seems to recall it ever having happened. From the first point it’s clear that this is the best match of the round. Razvan is pulling every serve tactic he knows, often to great effect, including one short looks-like-topspin-but-is-heavy-underspin that seems to bite the bottom of the net each time he reveals it. Han wins the first game 11-9, only to have Cretu immediately answer by an identical score. Many of the points are toe-to-toe power exchanges that boom boom boom leave the crowd cheering. It seems to me, as the match progresses, that Han adjusts to the serve a little better, is dragging the loop just a little wider, and Razvan, playing all out, leaves the table open in chasing those down. It’s six games and a win for the youngster, 9,-9,7,-7,7 as Han advances to the Semi-final, leaving Cretu with QE money.

**Semininals**

**Thomas Keinath vs. Michael Oyebode**

After the convincing shellacking of Leibovitz, Keinath runs into a buzzsaw here. The early-headed Thomas falls quickly down two games, 10 and 5! The crowd is buzzing as Michael is doing everything right, and again is scoring consistently with forehand loops and backhand blocks down the line. Keinath can’t let this continue if he expects to win, but how can he stop it? He begins to vary his pace, particularly to Oyebode’s backhand, and that small change throws Mike’s timing off, as he is too early, then too late, then too early, and Keinath forces corner-to-corner rallies. He accepts the challenge to stay right at the table, and stamina carries the day. It’s Oyebode who wins first, now lunging to try to get his forehand down-the-line backhand blocks from the German. It helps that Michael serves into the net in game four, when trailing 9-10, a moment Oyebode cannot seem to shrug off. After a shaky start, Keinath has righted himself and advances to the Championship match, -10,-5,6,8,9,7.

**David Zhuang vs. Han Xiao**

David’s pips and flat ball returns are nasty elements for anyone to deal with, and Han, who can accurately described as “unflappable,” is definitely getting flapped here, as he drops the first two games, 7 and 2. He’s having no trouble tracking the ball, but his forehand returns are (net) just not (net) climbing (net) against David’s flat hitting. To make matters worse, in the third game, David begins to twiddle, now throwing inverted topspin loops into the mix and keeping Han unsettled and uncomfortable. And was that? Yes, it was, even a penhold backhand loop from David to give Han yet something else to think about as a possibility. Han does better in the fourth, but it’s too many adjustments made too late against the veteran.

David advances in straight games, 7,2,5,9. After the match, Larry Hedges, the famous tactician, advances the theory that it’s the second loop that matters here, and that Han has so far to learn to go hard/soft/hard against David’s game. That’s a choice that will have to wait for a rematch!

**Championship Match**

Thomas Keinath vs. David Zhuang

You could not ask for a better scene. David, out to avenge his loss in 2002, has played at a high level all weekend. Keinath, simply amazing, has shown that he is not Superman, having dropped those first two games to Oyebode. Add in a couple hundred spectators, most of them knowledgeable about the game, two dedicated cheering sections, with New Jersey’s favorite fans on the right and Keinath’s Manhattan friends on the left. Oh! and there’s that small matter of the $2,000 for the winner and a modest $800 for the runner-up. All eyes are on the Championship court, spectators seated on all four sides, as Thomas takes the first game, 12-10. Nothing here will be easy, but David’s fans certainly feel comfortable as their champion takes one, then two, three! straight games, 9,6 and 8. David is playing like he is thirty years old again, but in between games, wife/couch/mother Joannie has no smiles for her player. She seems to urge him to end it now. But Thomas takes a big early lead, avoids the blowout, and notionally game five by a score of 11-7. Game six, and David is right on the verge, a 10-7 match point lead. But Keinath is absolutely fearless. He takes several powerful forehands straight through David’s forehand . . . deuce! But David has the serve, yet wastes that advantage when he catches the net cord . . . and the ball sails long! Up 11-10, Keinath unleashes another FH winner, and it’s just-like-that, three games apiece. Would that prey on your mind? Is it too much like 2002 again to be believed? David needs to reestablish himself if he wants this title and yes! does so in dramatic fashion, winning the first five points of game seven. But there’s mental toughness on both sides as Keinath refuses to fold, and 2-7, 6-8 pulls himself back into the game. David is making unforced errors, pushing long, playing tentatively. He knows it, you can see, but each shot has that brief “am I about to do the right thing?” hesitancy that each of us has felt ourselves, if not under such a glaring spotlight. Keinath is absolutely on fire, no hesitation, and against the odds, recovers from the 0-5 deficit to tie the game from down 6-9, 9-9 in the seventh!

In a perfect universe, time would freeze, and both these worthy Champions would stand poised forever, tied at 3 games apiece, 9 points apiece in the seventh game. The spectators, all staring at the court, filled with anticipation and dread, hopes and anxiety, hanging on the uncertainty of the next half-minute of play. It is symmetry. It is perfect balance. It cannot last, undoubtedly of the next half-minute of play, It is inner-up. Alleyes arecon the Championship match of the round. Razvan is pulling every serve tactic he knows, often to great effect, including one short looks-like-topspin-but-is-heavy-underspin that seems to bite the bottom of the net each time he reveals it. Han wins the first game 11-9, only to have Cretu immediately answer by an identical score. Many of the points are toe-to-toe power exchanges that boom boom boom leave the crowd cheering. It seems to me, as the match progresses, that Han adjusts to the serve a little better, is dragging the loop just a little wider, and Razvan, playing all out, leaves the table open in chasing those down. It’s six games and a win for the youngster, 9,-9,7,-7,7 as Han advances to the Semi-final, leaving Cretu with QE money.

USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE • Sept/Oct 2004
Seven, to earn Victory. It is an incredible, charged moment. But this does not last either, as David is quickly to his feet and earnestly, honestly, congratulating Keinath on a courageous effort. It is the most dramatic match I have ever seen.

It takes a special courage of a different sort for me to approach David Zhuang 15 minutes later now sitting alone at courtside as he slowly puts on his street shoes. "David ... thank you. You put things right with Barney. You reminded Han who is Boss. You had a really good time!" and as David and his family gather for the drive home. f'iii forced to lay themselves on the line at tournament after tournament. discarding their losses and cherishing their wins as they return to training for their next contest.

So. It was absolutely the best tournament I’ve ever seen! A spectator said to me as he was leaving “This was great! It should be like this every time!” But every time is different, and time cannot be stopped. “Make sure you come to the Eastern Open, in July, in New Jersey,” I urge him, “and we’ll see what happens next!”

Open Preliminaries
Group A: 1st Thomas Keinath, 3-0 (d. Cretu, def; d. David, 74,-9,3-3; d. Asgarali, 7,4,7,7); 2nd Razvan Cretu, 2-1 (d. David, -8,6,7,8,-6,6; d. Asgarali, 8,9,8,9); 3rd Khaelel Asgarali, 1-2 (d. Paul David, def); 4th Paul David, 0-3.

Group B: 1st David Zhuang, 3-0 (d. Leibovitz, 4,5,4,9; d. Evans, -12,2,3,4; d. Soskic, 8,6,2,4); 2nd Tahil Leibovitz, 2-1 (d. Evans, 5-9,6,3-6,2; d. Soskic, 6,7,9,2); 3rd Vukman Soskic, 1-2 (d. Evans, def); 4th Keith Evans, 0-3.

Group C: 1st Michael Oyebode, 2-0 (d. Reed, 10,-9,10,6,8,6,10; d. Wetzler, 5,7,3,-5,7); 2nd Barney J. Reed, 1-1 (d. Wetzler, 5,7,3,-5,7); 3rd John Wetzler, 0-2.

Group D: 1st Han Xiao, 3-0 (d. Gao, -6,8,9,-5,6,8,6,6; d. Webb, 8,9,4,9; d. Muallem, 12,6,7,7); 2nd Gao, 2-1 (d. Webb, 8,-9,7,7,6; d. Muallem, 4,5,8,8); 3rd Patrick Mualem, 1-2 (d. Nigel Webb, -7,8,9,-7,9,6,6); 4th Nigel Webb, 0-3.

Women’s Singles: Wang Chen d. N.R. Indu., 6,10,4,9.

Quarterfinal #4
Division One
Division One featured eight excellent teams, and they played single elimination for the top prize of $900. Matches were fun and exciting, with teammates cheering for each other all over the gym.

Quarterfinal #4 was the most exciting one – and that’s the one we’ll cover here. (The rest are in the online version.)

Quarterfinal #4
This match was the crowd-pleasing main event of the quarterfinal round. We had two evenly matched teams (the #4 and #5 seeds) going at it toe-to-toe. The #4 seeded team was Southern California Vietnamese TTC with Tung D. Phan (2319), Loc Ngo (2293), and John Thach Tran (2279). Amazingly, this team featured three left-handed players! And what a painfully long team name. Watching the team play, I couldn’t help out to form with no upsets. So, the divisions were set with the top eight teams competing for the $900 Division One top prize, and 10 teams competing for the $300 Division Two prize. The matches were fun and exciting, with teammates cheering for each other all over the gym.

Division One
Division One featured eight excellent teams, and they played single elimination for the top prize of $900. Matches were now best 4 out of 7. Quarterfinal #4 was the most exciting one – and that’s the one we’ll cover here. (The rest are in the online version.)

San Diego Teams
SAN DIEGO, CA • MAY 8-9, 2004 • BY SUNGILL KIM
Note: Due to space limitations, this is a very abridged version – the full version is online as a news item at the USATT home page (www.usatt.org).

San Diego is known for its sunny beaches and beautiful weather, and on Mother’s Day weekend it was also the place for beautiful table tennis. The inaugural San Diego Team Open was under way!

The San Diego Team Open is a two-day tournament featuring Davis Cup format matches between teams of 2-4 players. For those familiar with the Davis Cup format, a match between teams consists of two singles matches, a doubles match, and then cross over singles (if necessary). Since multiple players are involved, the strategy of setting your singles players and doubles players makes it a very fun format.

Before I get into the tournament, I’d like to take the time to thank our sponsors – Paddle Palace, Zeropong, Barona Casino & Resorts, and Thai Café. We couldn’t have done it without you, thanks!

There were 18 teams competing at the tournament, and there were many colorful team names. The top 4 teams went straight to Division One, and the rest battled it out for the 4 remaining spots in preliminary round play, which took place on Saturday morning. The matches played

out to form with no upsets. So, the divisions were set with the top eight teams competing for the $900 Division One top prize, and 10 teams competing for the $300 Division Two prize. The matches were fun and exciting, with teammates cheering for each other all over the gym.

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Enough with the nice introductions, let’s jump right into the action. Match number one was Khanh Duong versus John Thach Tran, and it was a beauty. Both players played well from the get go, and there were no cheap points. John played a great control and spin game. He made no misses, and he made his opponent work hard for each point. Khanh plays with all out attacking loops with his forehand and soft touch drop blocks with the backhand. Khan must have nerves of steel. No matter how hard his opponent loops, he drops the block in with the softest touch; never giving his opponent pace to feed off. But his technique is dangerous – one mistake popup and he sets up a kill for his opponent.

It’s a good thing Khanh’s touch was good this match, because John’s loop was definitely on. The pendulum of victory swung on the outcome of each point. The game scores tell it all, after five games Khanh was up 3-2, with scores of 5,9,9,-9,9. A couple of points swing either way and the match would have been over by now. The battle for the sixth game was almost a match in itself. Khanh tasted victory, but John was not done yet. The players slugged it out on each long, long point, transitioning smoothly from offense to defense, and then back to offense.
Nobody backed down, and going to deuce was only fitting for these two, and oh how sweet it was. There are deuce games, and then there are deuce games. This was a truly amazing 19-17 deuce game victory for John, as he stared defeat in the eye and won to play another game.

Could Khanh recover from this emotional body blow? His nerves of steel would not fail him, as in the 7th game he remained calm and executed his game with precision. John’s 6th game heroics were all for naught, as Khanh puts his team Little Saigon up one match to none. What a start!

Match two was just as thrilling. Little Saigon was represented by Tri Dinh, and the SCVTTC (I’ll keep this name short) put forth Tung D. Phan. The players got off to a slow start. Tri was called for a service fault early in the first game, and this seemed to rattle him as he never got going in the game. Tung took the first game easily.

In the second game, it was Tung’s turn to struggle, as he lost 4-11. It was only in the third game that things started to heat up, and the rallies got longer. In the end, Tung took the third 11-9, and we finally had a match on our hands.

The crowd knew that Tri had to come out strong in the 4th, as he did not want to be down 1-3, He came out with this sense of urgency, and played strong. He was looking good and very confident. It really looked like the tide had turned in his favor, and he was in good shape with a 10-8 lead. If he could just get this game he’d probably have the momentum to take the match. But Tung also knew the importance of the situation and fought hard to deuce it up. Both players were pumped to play this important deuce game, and there was hard playing and hard cho-ing. Tri had 2 more game points but could not finish Tung off. Tung was the more efficient as he took advantage of his first game point, and now held a commanding 3-1 lead.

What a devastating setback for Tri! He was playing so well, but he lost! Could he recover? He knew he could. Deep down inside, somehow he knew he was going to win. In games five, six, and seven, Tri went about calmly and methodically destroying his opponent. There was no place for emotion, only efficient execution. Tri pulled off the comeback, winning another close one 4-3.

Wow, two great matches already! The two first singles matches took up an hour and a half, and we hadn’t even played the doubles! Would the doubles also be close? You bet. Little Saigon’s doubles team was Khanh Duong and doubles specialist Quoc Nguyen. Quoc’s rated 2110, but he plays doubles better than any 2300 player I’ve seen. The SCVTTC knows this and came out prepared for a battle with John Tran and Loc Ngo.

The doubles was no different from the two previous singles. That means, (a) it went the full seven games; (b) there were 3 deuce games, and (c) Little Saigon won again.

What a nail-biting victory of Little Saigon! The final score was 3-0, but a couple of bounces here and there, and it could well have been a 0-3 defeat. Congratulations, Little Saigon, you’re going to the semis!

Nothing could top this quarterfinal match, so we’ll end here, with the full writeup online.

L-R: The Championship “VCI” Team of Tuan Le and Ramia Samari; Runner-up “Little Saigon” doubles team Khanh Duong/Quoc Nguyen and Tri Dinh.

Photos by Sungill Kim ©2004

Division 1
1st: “VCL,” Ramin Samari and Tuan Le
2nd: “Little Saigon,” Khanh Duong, Tri Dinh and Quoc Nguyen.

Division 2
2nd: “Filipino Duo,” Ron Spenser, Priscilla Umel, DJ Alto.
3rd: “Chicano and the White Guy,” Luis Houed and Derrick Cone.
Eastern Open

a STIGA North American Tour Event
PISCATAWAY, NJ • JULY 24-25, 2004 • BY ALAN WILLIAMS

There was one keynote that distinguished this event, that made it stand out from the other Tour stops and from the other Eastern Opens of yesteryear. It was passion. Yes, that’s passion with 1-F there was one keynote that distinguished this event. It was passion for the STIGA North American Tour Stop. It had to be more than money that motivates such an effort; it is a love of the game and the people who play it.

Similarly, the volunteers who answered Terry Bell’s call for Umpires showed a passion for the sport. Larry Bavly, Ross Brown, Pat Collins, Jim Bells and others that make up the infrastructure—scorecards, teams of paper, computer paraphernalia, tee shirts, notebooks, and other odds and ends that make up the infrastructure of a North American Tour Stop. It has to be more than money that motivates such an effort; it is a love of the game and the people who play it.

Table Tennis Pioneers, Graf and STIGA have been unflinching in their support for the Tour, an aspect perhaps best shown by Mitch Rothliech’s determination to obtain the European-made STIGA North American Tour Event Expert tables in time for this event. Brand new and ready to be the order of the day. Of which, more below. But the biggest ‘Hats Off goes to the players, Ban-ys capstone though had to be his victory in the Over 50. Oleg also showed up at the STIGA Easterns, sternly prohibiting hats on players and insisting on shirts, regardless of the player’s sex.

This was a classic design is a player favorite. It is on the line, when two players have highly different views of the same point, not only requires dedication but also a small masochist bent. I think. But the biggest ‘Hats Off goes to the players, Ban-ys capstone though had to be his victory in the Over 50. Oleg also showed up at the STIGA Easterns, sternly prohibiting hats on players and insisting on shirts, regardless of the player’s sex. Even the irascible Barry Dattel seemed to have

upsets and come-from-behind wins seemed to be the order of the day, of which, more below. But it would be remiss not to mention Antwain Davis and his victory in the U-22 Men’s group. Davis trailed Radu Nadrichetita two games to one and trailed in the fourth game 10-4! Davis stayed cool as a cucumber as lie fought off six match points to make deuce, and completed the turnabout by winning the match in the fifth. Turnabout was fair play when Antwain himself allowed a 2-0 lead against Ruslan Smolyansky to evaporate in the U-2125 final. Oleg Zakrzewski nearly turned over a 3-1 game lead for Duan Changping in the Over 50 before succumbing 11-6 in the seventh game. Oleg also managed to secure the first position in the group U-2250 to John Wetzler.

But spectator and players alike focus on the ‘money matches,’ those Open Singles matches that would lead to the title, and in this case, a $2000 payday. An unusually large number of no-shows and withdrawals marred the Second Stage Round Robin, leading to suggestion that NATT should be more flexible in letting qualifiers fill the empty brackets. In those matches that were made, and the ones that followed in the Sunday Quarterfinals, we were treated to varieties of drama and, yes, Passion with a capital ‘P.’ that made the Easterns an exciting and memorable weekend.

Group 1: Thomas Keinath, Michael Oyebode, Razvan Cretu, Tahl Leibovitz

The only group in which all four entrants showed up saw the top two seeds advance without incident. Razvan forced a pair of deuce games with Keinath, but lost 4-0. Oyebode was too quick for Tahl and also went on in four straight. Keinath saw Tahl bring deuce twice, but still triumphed 4-0. Cretu managed to take the second game against Oyebode, but couldn’t manage more than that, and defaulted a meaningless ‘who is third?’ match to Leibovitz.

“When you write the article,” Tahl asked me, “please at least say I played some points well.” That left Oyebode and Keinath to settle first and second place, but Mike could not manage to put the scare into Thomas that he did in Delaware, and although each game was close, Thomas secured the safer Title seed for the Quarterfinals, 7-9, 9-7, 9-0, 9-7.

Group 2: Chetan Baboor, Atanda Musa, Gao Yan Jun, Richard DeWitt

Gao Yan Jun first showed up at the STIGA Open, like Keinath, a Bundesliga veteran touring in America. There his play was more tentative than his New Jersey this weekend, as he announced his presence with authority, upsetting Baboor 8-9, 9-4, 6-4, 9-1 in a splendid match. With Musa a No Show, Dewitt would need at least one win to advance. He managed to nick Cheeta for a pair of games but it was a No Show. Dewitt saved a spot in the Quarters.

Gao was more efficient and set Dewitt aside in four straight (9-7, 8-8, 4) to become the group’s #1.

Group 3: Pradeeban Peter-Paul, Barney J. Reed, Paul David, Idan Levi

No one works harder than Pradeeban Peter-Paul, and with Barney withdrawing on Friday night, one win was all he needed to advance. He got it straight away, picking on Paul David’s backhand. 6-6, 6-7, 7. Levi caught fire against Peter-Paul, but only after dropping the first three games, losing the fifth at deuce. It was Paul David who advanced to the playing position of a top 8, running off four straight against Idan after a first game loss.

Group 4: Wang Chen, Florian Mueller, Xavier Therien, Ludovic Gombo

Here it was Wang Chen who announced a withdrawal, declaring after her win against Renata in the Women’s that she was too tired to compete in the Open. Xavier Therien, with his astonishingly energetic style could relate to being tired. First he played his heart out against the German, Mueller, nearly pulling off a big comeback of his own, but falling short as Florian held on to a 9-7, 4-9, 4-9, 4-9 win. Against the Frenchman, Ludovic Gombo, a never-say-die opponent with plenty of energy of his own, Therien overcame a deficit of 2-1 to advance 6-9, 6-6, 8-6, 8-6! Mueller did not find Gombo much easier on a point-by-point basis, but managed to secure the first position in the group and leave Gombo just short of the money, 6-11, 12-4.

Quarterfinals:

Keinath vs. Therien

Xavier is not going to leave anything in the tank as he goes out to take the top seed in this match, and after three games, leads 2 to 1! But Keinath is, as always, cool as the other side of the pillow, and 2-9, puts away the Canadian. Therien did best on exchanges of pure power, but had serious issues with Thomas’ service game, especially a mindbending short serve to the backhand delivered with little effort that was absolutely loaded with spin. Keinath advances, 4 games to 2.
pain toplay. Ten-y Bell, the tournament Ref now pays a courtside visit and Gao
seized with a crump. He will fall down awkwardly and claim to have twisted an
injury. But it's a correct one, and Paul David, due to a lack of bananas
seizes an injury timeout for a cramp. "It's not a
condition issue. A cramp is not an injury. It's a conditioning issue, and you can no more take
decisive garlic. Gao decided that the best idea was to establish a big early lead.

He is injured!" protests a group of Gao fans. But defeated he is, and properly
is out by default. "What a farce ensues! "It's unfair! You can't default him!
After 60 seconds, Collins is looking for his player, but Gao is still in
too much of Gao's diet. advances to the final! I set a mental note, that if I am ever
three only allowing 3 and 6 points each. The more I see him play, the
seemingly out of it as Paul David goes up 10-6 in the fifth game, Quadruple
and forth they traded points as they felt each other out. Each man had several
stroke are not pretty. But they work! Paul David senses vulnerability and goes
for the throat. After dropping the first game 9, David reels off one, two,
three straight wins to build an impressive lead, 12,6,9. Mueller is laboring, and
and seemingly out of it as Paul David goes up 10-6 in the fifth game. Quadruple
Match point! But pride is a great motivator, and Florian refuses to fold, wins
four in row, then six in row! He reverses the precarious position to take game five!
Coaching from Keinath seems to help, and Paul David is shaken by this
resurrection, goes soft, loses game 6 by an 11-7 count. Then in the deciding
game, it is Paul facing match point at 11-10, but when he wins three in a row
and the match, bounds onto the table, strikes a Rocky Balboa pose and screams in victory! Talk about Passion! It was gratifying to see, especially since Paul
has dropped some very tough matches at Tour events in the past few years.

**Oyebode vs. Gao**

This excellent match saw the quick off-the-bounce play of Oyebode
matched against the fine tactics of Gao. It seemed to me that Gao was much
more comfortable in this tournament than he had been at the STIGA, where he
lost to Han Xing in his first US appearance. Michael exploded all over Gao to
take the first game 11-7, but lost the second of the match at deuce. Oyebode
keeps the pressure on his opponents as well as anyone I've ever seen play, and
when he took the third game 11-9, was in the driver's seat. But this is where
Gao impressed! Down two games to one, he defeated Michael 12-10 to even
counters, and then 11-5 in the fifth game to go ahead 3 games to 2! Now it was
Michael looking 'all in,' moving heavily and unable to rip his forehand or find
that ever-so-effective backhand block down the line. But there is a serious
money differential between the Quarters and the Semis, and a determined
Oyebode springs back 12-10 in the sixth to create the passionate tension of a
decisive game. Gao decided that the best idea was to establish a big early lead,
and never let go as he prevailed 11-7 in the seventh.

**Semifinals: Keinath vs. Baboor**

You'd be hard pressed to find two greater gentlemen than this pair. They
had projected to be the Finals pairing, but Gao's upset of Baboor pushed Cheetan
in the bracket with Thomas. They certainly started with a barnburner! Back
and forth they traded points as they felt each other out. Each man had several
game point games, but Thomas was the first to put together two in a row and win
that first game by a score of 17-15! Cheetan had to have been crestfallen
following that tough loss, and Keinath took advantage quickly, notching games
two and three only allowing 3 and 6 points each. The more I see him play, the
more I realize what a consummate pro Keinath is. He's quick to discard
disappointment, quick to follow up an advantage, and poised and composed in all
circumstances. But Baboor is no slouch himself, and trailing 3 games to 0,
grabs both game 4 and game 5 and pulling himself back into the match. Keinath
realizes that Baboor is too dangerous, too experienced an opponent to allow
back into the contest and closes out a close game 6, winning 11-9.

**Gao vs. David**

Defeating Muller figured to be David's moment in the sun, and the Final
now looked to be Keinath and Gao, but fate stepped in and changed all that!
After winning the first game, Gao trails 10-7 in the second when he cramps so
badly that play has to be stopped. Umpire Pat Collins gives Gao a timeout and
on the sidelines his entourage quickly goes to work massaging his aching leg.
After 60 seconds, Collins is looking for his player, but Gao is still in too much
pain to play. Terry Bell, the tournament Ref now pays a courtside visit and Gao
is out by default. What an uproar ensues! "It's unfair! You can't default him!
He is injured!" protests a group of Gao fans. But defaulted he is, and properly
so. A cramp is not an injury, it's a conditioning issue, and you can no more take
an injury timeout for a cramp than use one to catch your breath. It's not a
popular decision, but it's a correct one, and Paul David, due to a lack of bananas
in Gao's diet, advances to the final! I make a mental note, that if I am ever
seized with a cramp, I will fall down awkwardly and claim to have twisted an
ankle.

**Championship Match: Keinath vs. David**

There's no question that Keinath is the dominant player here, and unlike
Mueller, his skills will hold off Paul David's best efforts. His serve (11-4) his
return of serve (11-5) his perfect footwork and superb conditioning (11-3)
make him more than a match for Paul who now retreats to the barriers and
turns into a lobber. Even though he ceded the fourth game 11-9, Keinath leaves
no doubt and when he takes the title 11-6 in the fifth, stands on the table
himself in a mock tribute to David's earlier dramatic moment, the new Eastern
Open Champion! Keinath is an absolute joy to watch, and the tournament,
despite the lopsided Final, has been a great success for Paul David as well.

USATT Certified National Coach Larry Hodges is, in fact, moved to state that
David can make 2600 in rating.

"He has a few flaws," Larry had noted after the Quarterfinals, "but they
are fixable flaws, things that can be corrected with proper technique. Some
players cannot overcome their weaknesses, but his are fixable. He needs to
better control the depth of his backhand serves so he can vary it long and short.
He needs to be willing to attack with his backhand more, so he can stay closer
to the table when he serves, not have to always cover the whole table with his
forehand. I can see him maybe breaking 2600 in a year or two."

And with that prediction of future growth, the torrential rains stopped,
the sun came out, and North American Table Tennis closed the curtain on
another successful event. Next on the calendar, the Matthew J. Manal Memorial
in suburban Maryland in August, where passionate ponders will once again put
their games to the test.

**Open Singles**

- Final: Thomas Keinath d. Paul David, 4,5,3-9,6
- SF: Keinath d. Chetan Baboor, 15,3,6-9,7,9
- David d. Gao Jun Yan, 8,10,8,7,6,4
- QF: Keinath d. Xavier Thieren, 10,6-10,2,9,2, Baboor d. Pradeeban Peter-Paul, 10,2,10,9,12
- David d. Florian Mueller, 9,12,6,9-10,7,11
- Gao d. Michael Oyebode, 7,10-9,10,5,10,7

**Women**

- Wang Chen d. Renata Peluchova, 2,5,3,7,6
- Over 40: Barry Dattel d. John Wetzler, 9,4,6,5
- Over 50: Changping Duan d. Oleg Zalevsky, 8,6,4,8-9,9,6
- Over 60: Mike Kukulakis d. Gary Gudzenko, 3,5,16
- Under 22 Men: 1st Antwan Davis; 2nd Raghu Madhuchettu
- Under 16 Boys: Charles Lin, Giovanni Quinones, 3,9,8,6
- Under 13 Boys: 1st Nathan Kung; 2nd Justin Kung
- Under 16 Girls: 1st Karen Ma; 2nd Isabella Chen
- Under 13 Girls: 1st Wing-Yee Ma; 2nd Connie Wang
- Under 10: Anand Engineer d. Annie Goo, 5,3-9,1
- U2500 – Final: Xavier Thieren d. Paul David, 4,7,7,5,6; SF: Thieren d. Razvan Cretu, 8,4-6,9,7; David d. Gao Jun Yan, 7-4,2,9,8,7
- U2375: Patrick Mualem d. Barry Dattel, 9,9,9-6,9
- U2250: John Wetzler d. Oleg Zalevsky, 8,4,5-11,5
- U2125: Ruslan Smolyanskiy d. Antwan Davis, 7-8,9,11,5,5
- U2000: Paul Engineer d. Satoru Hattori, 6,8,4-6,5,7
- U1850: Jianming Bai d. J. Hing Fang, 5-5,3-8,9,5,8
- U1700: Karen Ma d. David Gringaus, 10,6,3-8,7
- U1550: Andrew Wheeler d. Shing Choi, 3,7,7,15,7
- U1400: Kyle Landry d. Shing Choi, 3,7,8,10,9
- U1200: Kevin Lee d. Douglas Debekal, 5,11,6-8,11,8,4
- U1100: Prosper Bante d. Scott Lurry, 5,5-11,3,8
- U950: Alen Leon d. Michael Rufino, 9,5-9,8,7
- U800/Unrated: Jianxiang Wang d. Chance Friend, 9,9,7,9
- U4200 Doubles: Mike Kukulakis/Larry Bivley d. Alan Lin/Jim Li, 6,3,8
- U3200 Doubles: Tanvee Wong/Li Tsang d. Oyebode/Patrick Merryweather, 4,7,7

USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE • Sept/Oct 2004 24 81 3
The Amateur Athletic Union's Junior Olympic Games are truly a 'big deal,' with better than 20,000 young athletes competing in more than two dozen sports. This year marked the fourth time that North America Table Tennis (NATT) took on the mantle of competition organizers for the Table Tennis events. Every year the AAU selects a different city to host, and now plans to rotate the competition between five semi-permanent locations.

Credit certainly has to be extended to local organizer Steve Cunningham, who worked very hard to fulfill every possible need the competition would have. Likewise, a tip of the hat goes to Oklahoma's Larry Kesler, who acted as the Tournament Referee, presiding over just short of 70 enthusiastic young table tennis players.

But it is coaches who are most fundamental to the event. For the most part, participants arrive as part of a team, shepherded by some of the leading coaches in the country. From both the quality of the play and from the good sportsmanship of the athletes, it's obvious that these people are doing a great job. Mitch Seidenfeld brought a large

### Junior Teams Junior Doubles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Under 10 Boys</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Maryland</td>
<td>1. Justing Kung/Vikash Sahu (MD)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. California</td>
<td>2. Yevgeny Akhmetov/Christopher Brewer (CA/IN)</td>
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<td>3. Georgia</td>
<td>3. Eric Johnson/Emory Jiang (MN/CA)</td>
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<td>1. Maryland</td>
<td>1. Devin Zhang/Charlie Sun (MD)</td>
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<td>2. Minnesota</td>
<td>2. Nathuan Kung/Spenacer Lane (MD/TN)</td>
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<td>3. Georgia</td>
<td>3-4. Jose Barrow/Edmund Lee (GA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Maryland</td>
<td>1. Marcuus Jackson/Yahao Zhang (MD/CO)</td>
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<td>2. Indiana</td>
<td>2. Amaresh Sahu/Andrew Lin (MD/FL)</td>
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<td>3-4. Minnesota</td>
<td>3-4. A.J. Brewer/Swebny Lane (IN/TN)</td>
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<td>4. Indiana</td>
<td>4. Joel Roberts/Noel Roberts (MN)</td>
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<td>1. California</td>
<td>1. Misha Kazantsev/Trevor Runyan (CA)</td>
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<td>3-4. Minnesota</td>
<td>3-4. Jonathan Lo/Patrick Yee (IL)</td>
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<td>4. California</td>
<td>4. Vanek Zhu/Andre Khaiho (MN/IN)</td>
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<td>1. Minnesota</td>
<td>1. Andrew Knips/Nathuaniel Curran (MN)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Indiana</td>
<td>2. Dan Seemiller Jr./Kevon Schulz (IN/IL)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3-4. Indiana</td>
<td>3-4. Wayne Liu/Charles Lin (IL/NY)</td>
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<td>2. Georgia</td>
<td>2. Scott Fuller/Aldis Presley (GA)</td>
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<td>1. California</td>
<td>1. Serena Bank/Ione Chan (CA)</td>
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<td>2. Kristy Han/Jennifer Blaha (TX/CA)</td>
<td>2. Kristy Han (TX)</td>
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<td>1. Maryland</td>
<td>1. Leona Madison/Rachel Madison (MD)</td>
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<td>2. Indiana</td>
<td>2. Sarah Zheng/Jessica Yick (FL/CA)</td>
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<td>3-4. Indiana</td>
<td>3-4. Andrew Knips (MN)</td>
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<td>2. Dan Seemiller Jr. (IN)</td>
<td>2. A.J. Brewer (IN)</td>
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<td>3-4. Andrew Knips (MN)</td>
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<td>3-4. Jessica Yick (CA)</td>
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### Parade of Champions

1. Gordon Cochran (IN)
2. Dan Seemiller Jr. (IN)
3. A.J. Brewer (IN)
4. Andrew Knips (MN)

### Joel Farrell Award

Atha Fong (CA)

Atha Fong also won 4 gold and 2 silver medals.
and successful crew from Minnesota. Ralph Presley drove 17 hours to deliver the Atlanta contingent to the playing site, a sprawling high school complex. Bill Lui, Dan Seemiller, Larry Hodges, Zhang Ping, you didn’t have to look very far to see some of the best instructors and mentors working in Table Tennis today.

Play on Friday began with the Junior Olympic titles, on Saturday it was the US Junior National titles being contested, and on Sunday, the tournament concluded with the AAU Junior Teams competition. This competition is, in many ways, the staging area for future National champions and Olympians. Certainly an AAU Junior Olympics medal or USA Table Tennis Junior National title makes a great resume-builder, too. What college entrance board could fail to be impressed?

What is truly impressive is the way these young athletes conduct themselves, with grace and dignity, high-spirited fun and smiling dispositions. It is a serious competition, but compared to an adult event of the same size, far fewer ‘courtside conflicts.’ As part of the tournament staff, I have to say that it is heartwarming to see young ladies and gentlemen like the Madison sisters, Ione Chan, AJ & CJ Brewer and Trevor Runyan mount the medal stand.

There are also lessons to be learned here, sometimes, painful ones. With many of the top juniors training overseas, on trips to China and Europe, the ranks were

**Continued on page 84**

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**Scenes from the Junior Olympics/Junior Nationals**

Above, L-R: Mitch Seidenfeld talks to Joel & Noel Roberts in doubles action; USATT President Sheri Pittman awards the medals and trophies, including these to Eric Johnson; and Gordon Cochran (center) is congratulated for winning the Parade of Champions (single elimination, one game to 3 points!) by finalist Dan Seemiller Jr. and Spencer Lane.

Right: Medals!

Below, clockwise from top-left: The largest groups: Teams Maryland, Minnesota, California and Georgia.
Continued from page 83

somewhat thinner than in previous years. This only created a large opening for Misha Kazantsev, or as Larry Hodges was fond of calling him, 'the 800 pound gorilla' of the event. Misha enjoyed a substantial ratings bulge over his next nearest competitor, and was the pre-tournament favorite in the medal count. But that's why the matches are played, people! Thomas Yost took advantage of Misha's happy-go-lucky attitude in the U-22 category, derailing him in the semifinals and relegating Misha to Bronze. Misha had been sailing through the competition, but Thomas is becoming famous for giving some very highly rated people a tougher match than they expect! Even Razvan Cretu was in danger of dropping a match to Yost at the ACUI's a few years ago. With this, his only loss of the weekend, Misha lost a chance to sweep first place in the Junior National U-16, U-18 and U-22 events. It's not always easy to learn that there is a time for fun and a time to be serious.

It certainly was not a serious moment when Richard Lee decided to have the 'Parade of Champions' tournament. This is basically a chance for the youngsters to blow off steam, do something a 'little different,' the World's Fastest Single Elimination Tournament. Players formed two lines set off to play 'matches' of a single game to three points. The winners returned the clipboards and got back in line, while the losers became the audience. In little more than twenty minutes a Champion was decided, with Gordon Cochran emerging victorious (over Dan Seemiller, Jr.) and taking the Butterfly tee shirt in this winner-take-all melee.

There is another singular award at the Junior Olympics, the Joel Farrell Memorial Award. It is annually presented to the player who delivers an outstanding performance on the court, coupled with good sportsmanship. With a total count of four Gold's and two Silvers, it was impossible to dispute the performance aspect this year's winner attained. Coupled with her excellent manners and integrity, charm and the respect she showed both to her opponents and for herself, Atha Fong is a worthy recipient of this prestigious honor. In addition to her trophy, her name is now to be engraved on the plaque of previous winners at AAU headquarters.

Next year's AAU Junior Olympic competition takes place in Mandeville, LA. Any junior, any adult who works closely with juniors, would be well advised to plan now to attend. Well-organized, well attended, highly regarded, it is, beyond doubt, the single best Junior competition in American sports.
Barbara Wei

By Larry Hodges

Rating: Highest: 2059 before US Open (#2 USA Under 16 Girls)
Current: Dropped to 1965 after Baaaad! U.S. Open
Age: 15: DOB: 3-11-89
Hometown: Gaithersburg, MD
Home Club: Maryland Table Tennis Center
Equipment: Bryce Red 2.0 on forehand, Speedy P.O. 1.9 pips on backhand. Sponsored by Butterfly
Coach: Jack Huang (since I started playing), and some USA cadet team/junior team coaches on USATT trips

Barbara was originally a figure skater. She got started in table tennis when one of her skater friends brought her to the Maryland Table Tennis Center, which was close to her house. The friend quit playing soon after, but Barbara, then 8 years old, was hooked—especially though she said, “...it took almost three weeks for me to hit the ball, then three more to hit it on the table! But I liked it so much I stuck with it.”

During the school year, she practices 4-5 times per week, including three private lessons, Friday night league and Saturday group camp—where she has been recently taking this writer more and more to the cleaners! She says she hits a lot with Raghu Nadmichettu, James Duan, Kevin Ma and Marcus Jackson. During the summer, she said she usually “gets shipped off to China” — which is where she was this summer. While in China, she trains nearly every day for 5-7 hours.

Barbara’s game developed as a close-to-the-table hitter, with short pips on the backhand. As she’s gotten older, she has worked hard on developing her loop, but she says she still tries to hit too much, needs to loop more. She has a pounding backhand that few can stand up to.

When asked what made her such a strong player, she said, “Having a good coach who’s always there to help me out in tough situations. I’ve been training abroad for a long time, and having the opportunities to travel and play abroad.” She said that training abroad has helped her gain experience and confidence in playing.

Competing at the 2004 USA Olympic Doubles Trials (with Katherine Wang 3rd alternate USA Junior Team, 2002-2004)
U.S. #2 Under 16 Girls, #3 Under 18 Girls (July/August 2004)
Member, USA Cadet Team, 2002-2004
1st alternate USA Junior Team, 2004
2002 National Under 16 Girls’ Singles Champion
2002 Junior Olympic Under 14 Girls’ Singles Champion
2002 National Under 14 Girls’ Teams Champion
1999 Junior Olympic Under 12 Girls’ Singles Champion

She hopes to make the Olympic team in 2008 — but realizes how difficult that will be, with current stars Gao, Wang Chen, Tawny, Jasna, and all the other up-and-coming juniors. But, of course, that’s why she’s in China this summer! She’s also working hard to make the USA Team going to Portugal for the ITTF World Junior Championships. (The Trials are at the Canadian Junior Championships in Vancouver in August.) She also wants to make the USA Junior Team in 2005.

Outside of table tennis, she says her main interest is online communication — i.e., she’s hooked to the Internet. She has her own Xanga website at www.xanga.com/hce. She also likes traveling, and spending time with her family in China. She used to do a lot of sports (in particular skating, volleyball and swimming), but now focuses on table tennis and school. (Of her figure skating, she said, “I skated for six years, and couldn’t land the axel!”) She does have one interesting side interest — she likes to fly kites. But she says she’s too busy most of the time for that.

She is an excellent student. She goes to Holton-Arms School, a private (and expensive) prep all-girls school in Bethesda, MD, and is going into the 10th grade. She is taking numerous honors classes, and says that Latin is her best subject, while math is her worst. Last semester, she had one B and the rest A’s. She said, “It puts pressure to do well in both school and table tennis, since both take up lots of time. If I don’t do well in school that’s first, and so my table tennis will come down in level because I can’t practice much if I don’t get good grades.”

She says her future non-table tennis plans are to go to a nice college that suits her and her major, whatever that might be. She wants to be more confident in herself, and less passive. But she’ll always have table tennis.

“Table tennis is part of my identity now, and it’d be weird to live without it. It’s like I’d go into ping-pong withdrawal or something if I stop.”

She added, “I’d like to thank the people who have made it possible for me to get this far. Coach Jack, Butterfly, USATT, and my parents for dealing with me and tournaments, and taking me to practice and paying for everything!” After all, given the high cost of training future Olympians, her parents could just as easily have told her to, well, go fly a kite!
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