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ON THE COVER:

2005 Stiga North American Teams Champions

CANADA 2008: Wilson Zhang Peng, Predeeban Peter-Paul, Bence Csaba
Cover Photos and Cover Design by Tom Nguyen ©2006

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SUBSCRIPTIONS: All USATT memberships include a subscription. Rates in the U.S. and Canada are $40/year, $100/three years, Household $60/year or Junior $20/year. For all other countries, the fee is $60/year or $180/year. Single copies are $3.95 plus postage, prepaid for addresses in the U.S. or Canada and $7 elsewhere. Magazine subscriptions without USATT membership are $20/year for USA & Canada, other countries $50/year. Subscription orders and inquiries concerning subscriptions should be sent to USATT Headquarters, One Olympic Plaza, Colorado Springs, CO, 80909, admin@usatt.org. All subscription orders are payable in U.S. currency only. For CHANGE OF ADDRESS, send both old and new addresses and label from the most recent issue, or e-mail the address change to admin@usatt.org. Reproduction without express written permission is prohibited. Copyright ©2006. All rights reserved.

USA Table Tennis Magazine • January/February 2006
2005 US National Team Member
2005 ACUI College Nationals Women's Singles Champion
2005 ACUI College Nationals Women's Doubles Champion
2004 US National Team Member
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2004 US Nationals Women's U-22 Champion
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China Open, single 97
Italian Open, single 98
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China National Team Coach 03–
USA Table Tennis Magazine Needs Writers!

Want to see your name in print? USA Table Tennis Magazine is putting together a list of potential feature writers. If you are interested in writing profiles of assigned players, clubs or leagues, doing write-ups of regional tournaments (usually 4-star), or other types of writing, send your address, phone number, email address, and writing background & interests to Editor Larry Hodges at larry@larrytt.com.

Did we mention that you get paid too? (That’s why we need your address.) The pay is not great, and you shouldn’t do it for that reason. But assigned writers get paid roughly $20 for articles less than half a magazine page; $35 for articles between half and a full page; and $50 for longer ones.

Teams Added to Olympics, Doubles Dropped

Lausanne, Switzerland, Oct. 27 - The International Olympic committee voted to replace Doubles at the Olympics with Teams. This was at the request of the International Table Tennis Federation. The change will take effect starting with the Beijing Games in 2008. The IOC is trying to limit the number of events and athletes at the Games, and would not have agreed to add Teams without removing Doubles.

One effect of this will be that a dominating country can no longer win more than one medal in Tennis, as opposed to at least two medals in doubles four times in table tennis. China has won one medal in Tennis, since countries will be limited to the number of events and athletes at the Games, and would not have agreed to add Teams without removing Doubles.

They Said It...

By Larry Hodges

“A sleepless Hank protests when Dale and Bill play ping-pong one night. But the pair ignored his pleas for quiet. Angered, Hank rises from his bed, grabs the ping-pong ball, and smashes it with his foot.” - Description of Episode 311 of the Fox TV show “King of the Hill.” Contributed by Robert Mayer.

“I swear, we could probably join the ESPN ping-pong tournament and we’d probably make it somewhere. It’s ridiculous. We would seriously play for like three to four hours a day, every day. We’d practice for an hour, we’d play ping-pong—it was back and forth.” - Dan Marsala, from the music group Story of the Year, of how they spent their free time while writing the songs for their new album, “In the Wake of Determination.” Contributed by Robert Trudell.

Stephen Timblin: “Katie told us you’re the set’s table tennis champ.”

Stanislav Ianevski: “Yeah, I even have to let people win once in a while!”

-From Nov. 2005 issue of “Disney Adventures” magazine, page 42. Actors Timblin and Ianevski play Cho Chang and Viktor Krum, respectively, in “Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire.”

Contributed by Victor Kan, who has got to be related to Viktor Krum.

“I have 1200 reasons to really dislike that outcome.” - Canadian Champion Pradeeban Peter-Paul, as he pocketed the $800 second-place prize money, of the difference between first and second at the San Diego Open.

“I know how much you want to go, but I’m just a candy store owner. I haven’t got the money to send you.” - Mayo Rae Rolph’s father, on not being able to pay her way to the Worlds ... in 1937! From obituary of Rolph in this issue, by Tim Boggan.
Pottsgrove Table Tennis League

By Ben Wolski
www.speakeasy.org/~hackney/pottsgrove

For the past two years, Pottsgrove Table Tennis Club has run a weekly league on Thursday night. With well over 1600 total matches and over 85 participants so far, it has been an ambitious and rewarding endeavor for our club. Located about 30 minutes from Philadelphia, Pottsgrove is located in a wonderful high school gym with great lighting, padded walls, and eighty-foot tall ceilings. During our peak season, we have roughly fifteen to twenty people playing on five tables every Thursday night. Club organizer Steve Lowry and marketing director Ben Wolski help set up players into groups, input the results, and make sure everyone has a great time. Players use the league to get ready for upcoming tournaments, get a great workout, and test themselves against higher level competition. There is a huge variety of playing styles and rating levels that all benefit from the league format.

Pottsgrove table tennis league has attracted many of the top players in the state of Pennsylvania. The League has provided a formal structure for our higher level players — while also giving newcomers the ability to compete without feeling like they are completely blown off the table. Players in Pottsgrove have really gotten into playing within the league format. Almost all come early to warm up before matches begin and often save the most desired "opponent" for the final match of the evening. The league provides a healthy competitive atmosphere and a set number of opponents and matches for our members.

What perhaps makes our league different than most is our open format. Most clubs run leagues during a season or as a special paid event. We run our weekly league for all players and never turn anyone away or charge monthly fees. Newer players get assigned an initial rating and have a better idea where they fit into the table tennis world. And seasoned vets can go right into the group which benefits them the most from a competition standpoint. This, in many ways, gives our club a much stronger sense of community and balance.

What I enjoy most about our league are the crazy antics of our players (myself included). There is the always friendly padded wall nearby if you need to blow off some steam. Very special thanks to Paddle Palace and Stiga for sponsoring the league and giving vital assistance with our league promotions. Great thanks to the Pottsgrove recreation board and, in particular, Gene Swann, who has been an avid supporter of our club for many years. Most of all, thanks to everyone in the Pottsgrove table tennis community who has participated in our league over the past two years.

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Ma Lin
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Wang Hao
#3 World Ranking
DHS rubber G666

Lin Guanzheng
Gunter finalist
DHS rubber (HR3)
DHS blade Hurricane (H-LG)

Wang Nan
#3 World Ranking
DHS rubber (HR3)
DHS Blade Hurricane (H-WN)

Guo Yan
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DHS rubbers (HR3)
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Everything for the Table Tennis Player!
President's Report
By Sheri Soderberg Pittman

According to Chinese astrology, 2006 is the Year of the Dog. In America, we say that a dog is man's best friend. In USA Table Tennis, clubs should be the association's best friend. So, I'm declaring 2006 the Year of the Clubs! In this “association primer series” you’ll learn more about why clubs are dear to my heart and why clubs will be my focus for the rest of my term as president.

Many of you probably don’t know that my passion for table tennis stems from the great experiences I had at my local club as I was growing up. Old-timers may fondly remember Magoo’s. The owner, former USATT President Charlie Disney, later renamed it Disney’s. It was an apt name, turns out, because, to me, it made my whole world magical and fun. Outside of school, my brothers and I practically lived there. Later, Charlie Disney would chuckle that he “brought up the Soderbergs.”

What made the club so magical and fun? There were lots of programs for kids. We played in junior leagues, high school leagues and socialized together. The tournaments had lots of age classifications: U13, U5, U17. Of course, there were adult leagues and programs too. We always participated in special training camps over Christmas and in the summer. Eventually a lot of the boys would challenge me. They’d ask, “What are you doing? Can’t you see girls don’t belong here?” I had five brothers. I was used to boys, so being in that type of environment didn’t faze me. Gradually, though, I started shifting my attention away from the “field of play” table to the other surrounding tables - the tournament control table, the writing tables, the common area tables. I loved to offer administrative support, to write about table tennis, and to talk with the people who shared the same love of the sport.

As I said, we had so much fun. We’d travel as a caravan from Minneapolis to attend tournaments in Wisconsin, Iowa, and Illinois. For the USOTC’s, the club would charter a Greyhound-type of bus to Detroit. When the club relocated and needed lots of elbow grease, we all pitched in. We all learned along the way how to make tournament draws, how to behave and how to work together. We learned to treat newcomers practically like royalty. And that’s how our club expanded and excelled. We got to have more fun with people who got to share in this magical environment we’d created together. There was an infrastructure in place and everything worked out well.

At the backdrop of all this was Ping Pong Diplomacy. From the start, I felt pulled into every aspect of our sport. Even at the age of 11 or 12, I knew that this was the sport for me. For life. No question. So I always strived to understand table tennis at all levels - locally, nationally and internationally.

My first position on the Board was from 1993-1996. How did that come to be?

For one thing, my first club had produced a series of USATT officers – Charlie Disney, Gus Kennedy and Sheila O’Dougherty. So I always had a sense of what the national association was doing.

Then, during the early 1990s, at this point with 20 years into the sport, I started contributing lots of articles about the top players in the world. I’d met a few of them in the late 1980s, after I’d returned from my service in the Peace Corps. Houshang Bozorgzadeh, the coach of my great childhood friend, Johnny Stillions, was our national team manager. He knew lots of foreign players, so he introduced me to some of them. Since I had lived in a French-speaking country, it was fun to speak in French to the current top stars Jean-Philippe Gatien and Jean-Michel Saive. Later I asked myself, why aren’t there articles about them in Table Tennis Topics (which our national magazine was called then)? So, in 1990, I asked co-editors Tim Boggan and Skott Bakke if they’d be interested in such articles. My contributions were accepted and often were the magazine’s cover story.

As I started writing more and more, people would approach me and ask me if I would write about different subjects, what my opinion was on different things, and, finally, whether I would be interested in being involved in policy matters. I always resisted considering running until I faced the death of my mom toward the end of 1992. I was absolutely broken hearted by the prospect of losing her, so I decided that the time was right to devote more of my attention to our national association.

When my term was nearing expiration in 1996, I was disillusioned. The experience had not been a good one. Besides, at that point, I was about to serve in a position at the Atlanta Olympics and I didn’t want to have any conflicts of interest. But as a Board member from 1993-1996, I’d received the ITTF’s Bulletin. Ochiro Ogimura had been the ITTF president during much of that time and he would frequently write about his vision for the United States. Every time I read what he’d written, I felt his words so powerfully in my heart. Like him, I always believe that the United States has the potential to become a world leader in our sport.

By 1998, I decided to run again. Since 1999, I have served as USATT president. My term will run out after the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics. It’s been a hard, but also a rewarding, road. Like many USATT presidents before me, I have had my share of ups and downs. But the work of transforming our association’s culture has always been the calling that keeps me motivated.

All of the presidents before me faced chronic challenges. Decades of factional squabbling, association dysfunction and the perpetual lack of resources has “burned out” many of our best contributors and has caused membership attrition. The USOC isn’t pleased by our lack of Olympic medal production; therefore, our opportunities and resource allocation within the USOC reflect our presumed medal potential. And our lack of resources perpetuates the cycle. Even within our association, many of our members frequent Internet chat rooms and forums where they spread rumors and amuse themselves by criticizing, instead of committing themselves to, USATT. Over the past several years, during my term, USATT has made many improvements in the areas of ratings, our magazine, professionalizing tournaments, the creation of a league, etc. But there is so much more to accomplish, especially if we’re committed to total organizational transformation!
In the spring of 2005 I became aware of a worldwide company whose mission is transformation. It's called Landmark Education. I looked it up on the Internet and found their website, www.landmarkforum.com. I was impressed by the organization's stand for personal and organizational transformation. As I navigated myself through the website, I found information about their local office. I called them and registered for their initial course, the Landmark Forum. Going through their program has made a huge difference in my leadership capabilities. It has reinvigorated me. I recommend this course to everyone. Please consult their website or feel free to contact me if you need more information about Landmark Education.

One of the questions Landmark asks as an inquiry is, “What is missing the presence of which would make a difference?” Surely many things are missing in our organization or we'd be just where we want to be. So I asked some people to meet with me to really look into this question. The answer we decided at the general level was groups of people working well together. Growth would spiral upward and we'd be able to find the resources to transform. I'm asking you to start by communicating your thoughts and your needs. Please e-mail your comments and feedback to me at sheripitman@yahoo.com.

With the remaining space, I'd like to provide you with some updates.

2006 Election and USOC Proposed Bylaws

USATT has received a USOC proposal that would substantially impact our governance structure including our Board's composition, which will affect future elections. At the Board’s final meeting in 2006, despite nearly four month's advance notice, not enough Board members were present to pass any changes to the Bylaws. Those present agreed with the items that were enumerated by our USOC liaison at the previous meeting and presented in my last president's report. As soon as the Board decides what to adopt, including the transition process, we will post that information at www.usatt.org. You may also find the proposed changes on our website.

USOC Resource Allocation

The Board approved USATT's 2006 budget. At the time we still had not been informed of the USOC resource allocation for our elite athlete programs. Since then, the USOC has informed us that they will provide USATT with about $175,000. So we are making some budgetary adjustments and should be able to publish the final budget shortly.

USATT Regional Training Center

The Board voted to designate the New York International Training Center as our first Regional Training Center. In doing so, the Board followed the recommendation of both the Regional Training Center Committee and the Elite Athlete Committee.

2006 World Championships

Congratulations to the 2006 National Team! If you are interested in attending the World Championships as a spectator, please contact USATT headquarters.

I wish you all a happy and healthy 2006. And I am looking forward to working together for the total transformation of USA Table Tennis! I am committed to you all having a fun and magical experience in our sport.
MARCH 3-5, 2006
RENO, NEVADA
RETURN OF

VISIT WWW.USATTEVENTS
Club of the Month: New York Table Tennis Club
By Michael Kendal

New York players at the 2005 Junior Olympics. Coach Liu is in third row, second from left.

If you want to elevate your game you might want to become a student of Coach Liu’s. Coach Liu offers world-class training for a very reasonable price. Attesting to his coaching ability is Deng Yaping, a former student and a world woman’s champion for a number of years. Of course not all players are destined to become world champions but whether you are six or sixty he patiently offers advice on how to better your game. Thanks to Coach Liu and his valuable insight I know that my game has significantly improved.

The club is open six days a week and is closed on Monday’s. If you are looking to sharpen your game, be challenged and have an enjoyable evening you will be pleased with what the NYTTC Club has to offer. If you are looking for a night out with your friends or loved one why not come out and play, the place is perfect. It is inexpensive and inviting. As a member of the New York Table Tennis Club for the last few years my feelings are that this is one of the best places to play in all of the metropolitan area. I highly recommend that you come on out and experience it for yourself.

The New York Table Tennis Club located at 35-26 Prince St. in the heart of downtown Flushing, NY, has been a magnet for table tennis enthusiasts since 1994. This great location lends itself to an evening (or afternoon) of play usually followed by an authentically cooked Chinese meal at the many restaurants within its vicinity. The club is run by Hui Yuan Liu, euphemistically known as Coach Liu. Coach Liu takes the game seriously, attracting many high caliber players, including the legendary Alex Tam, one of the best players in the world during his heyday. Other regulars include top-rated Shao Yu and Stephanie Shih, who is on the USA junior national team and a student of Coach Liu’s. What makes the New York Table Tennis Club special is that not all players are top rated but all who utilize the club (including non-members) are treated as if they are.

Corrections
On page 22 of the Nov/Dec issue, in the group photo of the USA Junior Team in Brazil, Steven Chan was misidentified as Jeff Huang.

In the Nov/Dec issue, in the listing and bios of top college players on pages 50-53, three players were left out of the rankings. They were:

**Amanda Dubina**
Rating: 2017 (#6 in College Women)
A senior math major at Malone College, she is a three-time (and current) Ohio Women’s Champion, Ohio Open Doubles Champion, and the 2003 ACUI Region 7 Women’s Table Tennis Champion.

**Felicia Chiu**
Rating: 1942 (#8 in College Women. Note that this rating is from 2002; however, she has been active in no-USATT rated college events.) A junior pre-medical student at Cornell University Medical, she was the bronze medalist for Under 18 Girls at the 2002 Junior Olympics.

**Laura Leach**
Rating: 1923 (#9 in College Women)
A junior finance major at University of Colorado at Boulder, she finished tied for third in women’s singles at the 2003 ACUI College Championships, was the USA Mixed Doubles Runner-up for the 2002 USA Nationals (belatedly held at the 2003 U.S. Open). and swept Junior High School Doubles and Girls’ Singles at the 2001 USA Nationals.

**Vladislav Boyarskikh**
Rating: 2348 (#5 in College Men)
A senior psychology major at StonyBrook University, he was the Tambov State Champion in Russia, and was formerly the #5 junior player in Russia. He made the final of Under 2500 at the Lafayette Open.

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Sunday March 19th, 2006  A classic "old school" hardbat competition

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or email the Tournament Director: mike.babuin@townofcary.org

For more information on classic table tennis go to: www.usctta.org/
Interview with Iradeeban Ieter-Iaul

Canadian National and Top Twelve Champion • North American Teams Champion • Dec. 6, 2005 • By Larry Hodges

Hometown: Ottawa, Canada.
Home Club: National Training Centre in Ottawa
Age/Date of Birth: 28, May 17, 1977
Height/weight: 5'11", 170 Lbs
Current rating: 2604
Sponsor: Butterfly/Martin Kilpatrick
Equipment: Peter Korbell Offensive, Bryce max and fair chack speed glue
Best titles:
• 2004 Canadian Men’s Singles Champion
• Canadian Top Twelve Champion in 2000, 2001 and 2005
• Won 5 Canada Cups
• Canadian National Team since 1994

Where are you from originally? If not Canada, when and why did you move to Canada?
I’m from Sri Lanka and I moved at the age of 11 to Germany and then I moved to Canada at the age of 16. I speak Tamil, German and English.

How and when did you get started in table tennis?
I started when I was 11 in Germany at school.

Who are your coaches?
Wang Enlong and Dejan Papic.

Describe your playing style. What are the strongest parts of your game?
My strengths are my forehand topspin and my serves.

Where do you train, and with who? What is your training schedule?
I was training in Ottawa for the past ten years, but I was training in New York at the Wang Chen table tennis club for the past four months. I usually train in Canada with my team, Homayoun Kamkar-Parsi, Xavier Therien, and Faazil Kassam, but for the past four months I was training with Wang Chen, Paul David and Shao Yu. I was in China this summer for a training camp for a month. I always practice five times a week, and sometimes more if we have training camps.

What type of physical training do you do? I always do weight training in the off season, but during the competition season I go jogging.

Tell us about your recent success at the North American Teams, and in particular about your win over David Zhuang.
It was probably one of my better tournaments. I won all my matches at the tournament. I had beaten David Zhuang three times prior to this tournament, but the last time I beat him was in 2002. I lost to him the last four times. I was playing well and my backhand topspin was good and that made the difference this time.

Anything to say about Wilson Peng and Bence Csaba, and their wins in the final? Wilson and Bence played really well. Wilson played really well the whole tournament and lost only one match to Feng Zhe, and it was very close with Feng. It was a very good team effort. Bence played really awesome in the last match under so much pressure. Bence is currently training and playing in Austria. We have a strong team now and we want to reach the round of 16 at the World Championships in Germany.

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
What are your most memorable moments in table tennis?
Beating the number 60 player in the world at the Swedish Open in '99, winning the Canadian Championships, and winning the North American Teams last weekend.

What are your goals in table tennis?
I want to win a gold medal at the commonwealth games, and reach top 100 in the world. I want to go to 2008 Olympics.

Tell us about your family.
I have one older sister who does not play table tennis. My parents and my sister live in Toronto, Canada.

Do you have any non-table tennis goals or plans?
I was studying Business in college. My major is finance. I will finish college after the World Championships.

Any advice for up-and-coming players?
It is very important for young players to have a good coach at the beginning when they start playing, so they can learn the right techniques right away. It is difficult to fix or correct the technique when you get older. Young players have to play a minimum of five times a week.

Table Tennis Crossword Puzzle #4  By Larry Hodges
Solve the crossword puzzle, and YOUR NAME will be published in the next issue, along with the solution!
All answers can be found in this issue. Send solution by Feb. 1 to Editor Larry Hodges at larry@larrytt.com, 240-686-0128 (fax), or USATT Magazine, 13403 Demetrias Way, Germantown, MD 20874.

Across
6. He's a gambler, and took a training trip to China.
9. The pressure is all in the what?
10. Won singles at two Pro Tours.
11. Once one of the best players in the world.
13. Pulled out the final, 11-9 in the seventh!
16. Smashes ping-pong ball with his foot.
18. In seven finals.
19. Allows for extremely heavy topspins on the forehand side.

Down
1. Learned to play in Germany.
2. The World Veterans will be here.
3. Teams added.
4. Wants to sponsor 500 junior memberships.
5. Won Open, Under 2250 and Under 2100!
6. USATT Magazine needs them.
8. Clinched the Championships in the fifth match.
9. They won Division Three.
12. Leads the Dixie Division.
14. Programs Coordinator.
15. Unique grip.
17. Probability of Winning a Single Point.

Last Issue's Solution
Those who successfully solved it:
Daniel Barnes
Dave Edwards
Phillip D. Smith
Andy Hutzel
Jerry Golubow
Caroline Vassallo

USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE • January/February 2006 23
The year 2006 has begun with exciting news: the World Veterans Table Tennis Championships will be held in Bremen, Germany, May 15-20, at the same site as the Liebherr World Team Championships which are scheduled for the last week of April.

Mrs. Diane Scholer, President of the Swaythling Club International (SCI) and an ITTF Veterans Committee member from Dusseldorf, Germany, took on an enormous task, together with Mr. Hans Westling (Gottenberg, Sweden) the ITTF Deputy Chair of World Veterans Championships, in organizing this grand international event. 3,500 Veteran players from all corners of the globe will have the opportunity to compete in the same venue and on the same tables as these world-class athletes who will be playing in the World Team Table Tennis Championships at the newly renovated sports and Exhibition Complex, which, according to Mrs. Scholer, “are superb playing conditions.”

Doreen Schofield, V.E.T.T.S. International Coordinator from Stockport, England, had already arranged a group from the Veterans English Table Tennis Society to participate in Bremen in the World Veteran Table Tennis Championships in the blooming days of May. Her friends and colleagues, including Doreen’s husband and her mixed doubles partner, Derek Schofield, and Mr. Brian Halliday (ITTF), plus all those English visitors who took part in the last October’s Huntsman World Senior Games and won batches of medals, have sent in their entry forms in order to compete in the upcoming World Senior Event in Germany. Do you want to play? Hurry up and send your entry form. Fax 0049-211-602-89918 or call 0049-211-601730. You might become a world champion!

“Defy Gravity – Your Chance to Fly,” the theme of last October’s Huntsman Senior Games in St. George, had a tremendous impact upon many mature players not only in Utah, USA, but also in the Caribbean Region of North America. Senior Barbadians avidly stepped forward to continue the Caribbean Games and become involved in various sporting activities. The Caribbean Senior Games Association (CSGA) cordially invites any player, mature but young-at-heart, to Barbados, either to participate in its Calendar of Events or just to visit there as its guest. The Association’s theme for 2006 is “Growing Old is Cool.” This CSGA organization is pleased to announce that the Caribbean newest institution – “the First Healthy Lifestyle and Active Aging Club” – is also open to any mature adult, and that those athletes who will be selected would represent Barbados at international events such as the World Senior Games. According to the Calendar of Events, the Caribbean or Regional Games are scheduled on Sept. 23-24, 2006, and the beginning of October is reserved for the Caribbean Seniors’ Team to participate in the 20th Annual Huntsman World Senior Games in Utah, USA. For additional information, check out these websites: www.regionalseniorgames.com and www.caribbeanames.com.bb.

North American Table Tennis and the Stiga North American Tour is now advertising their 2006 Tournaments. The 2006 Western Open will be held on Feb. 18-19, in Berkeley, California, and on Apr. 15-16 in San Diego, California. These tournaments also include the Feingold Memorial Senior Events. Contact: North American Table Tennis, 301-738-8250, info@natabletennis.com, or www.natabletennis.com.

In Southwestern Ohio, there is a wonderful place called Hithergreen Senior Center. Fifty-five Seniors flock in five days a week from 9 AM to 4:30 PM. They have an opportunity to exercise and play table tennis. Some time ago, a group of just six people started to regularly practice table tennis and now those Ohioans regularly compete in Senior tournaments, including the Huntsman World Senior Games. Last year some of them participated in the National Senior Olympics in Pittsburgh. Sid and Jan Stansel, in their early days, went to college with Tim Boggan and their lifelong friendship steadily developed with their support and affection for this sport. By the way, we may congratulate Tim Boggan, USATT Secretary and Historian, for his new position as “Director for Sponsorship and Advertising of the Swaythling Club International,” in additional to his many important activities in helping to develop table tennis on local, regional, and world levels.

Table Tennis is also starting to bloom in the area of the Rio Grande Valley, TX, as a result of a steady influx of active retirees who make winter home there, or for some, their permanent residence. The gold medalist of many senior tournaments, Rosemary Davis, Missouri, occasionally visits this Harlingen Table Tennis Club in Texas, in addition to the St. Louis Table Tennis Club – known as the St. Charles T.T.C. We are extending an invitation to these seniors from Texas and St. Louis, to join the Meiklejohn North American Seniors Tournament in Laguna Woods, June 1-4. Let’s enjoy table tennis together and have fun to the fullest under the friendly Californian sun!
What's Wrong With This Picture?

Dear Editor,

As I pack my bags for the Stiga National Team Tournament in Baltimore I took a look at the USA Table Tennis Magazine and noticed that many of the pictures in this issue and others simply have no young players in the club pictures. I am not saying all of them, I am saying most of them. What is wrong with these pictures? We need young players.

This year’s North American Tennis is the first tournament that my son will be able to compete with kids his age on the same team. One of the things that many juniors suffer with is not the fact that they cannot keep up with the adult players, it is just mentally draining to have to always play adults. Kids want to be with kids.

Members of USA Table Tennis must understand that to get more junior development they have to reach out more to other young players. I remember talking with Alan Cooke, many-time National Champion of England, on how they got so many juniors playing in England. He told me that the editor of the English table tennis magazine includes many photos of junior players to help promote junior development. When I took a look at the English magazine it was true, there were tons of photos of young players. If any member reads this article, we need your help, we need you to spend quality time with young players coming into a table tennis club for the first time. They need to feel welcome and need to be encouraged right away. For any good shot the young player hits, there should be rewards. The rewards that we, as members of the USA Table Tennis Association will see, is that we will have a much larger pool of young players to compete with the rest of the world in years to come.

Scott Preiss
Father of two young players
Certified National Table Tennis Coach and Trainer
www.pingponglive.com
**In Memoriam: Nobuhiko Hasegawa (1947-2005)**

By Ian Marshall, care of ITTF

It is with great sadness we announce the passing of Nobuhiko Hasegawa of Japan, on Sunday, Nov 6, 2005. He was fifty-eight years old.

He won five gold medals at the World Championships during his career. His greatest success was in 1967 in Stockholm when he captured three titles: Men's Singles (over teammate Mitsuru Kohno), Men's Teams, and Mixed Doubles with Noriko Yamawaka.

Two years later in Munich he was again a member of the successful Japanese men's team, and was once again Mixed Doubles Champion, this time with Yasuko Konno.

Nobuhiko Hasegawa stood out from the crowd for two major reasons: he was supremely fit and he held the racket in a unique way.

**Athletic**

The speed he moved about the court attracted the attention of both the media and the crowd. They delighted in seeing him return ball after ball with his lobbing defense. It was his athleticism that caught their eye, while his dynamism made him a wonderful player to watch.

He trained extremely hard, both at developing his table tennis skills and also at making himself supremely fit. When training he would wear lead weights around his waist and sandbags on his wrists to increase his strength. To improve his technique he would stand in front of a mirror and practice his strokes.

**Penhold Grip**

Born on March 3, 1947, in Seto in Aichi Prefecture, Japan, he was a member of a family thoroughly immersed in the sport of table tennis. Everyone played and Nobuhiko started his career with the penhold grip.

He wasn't too successful. The growing power in table tennis was China, and Japan needed someone who could compete against their Asian neighbors. After the World Championships in 1963 the Japanese coaches recommended that Nobuhiko should try the shakehand grip. It proved the right move, he made rapid progress and at the age of seventeen he recorded his first "big win," defeating the established Japanese international Koji Kimura (now a member of the ITTF Executive Committee).

**Trademark**

Further successes followed and the grip combined with his athletic play became his trademark. He held the racket in his right hand with the forefinger straight up the back of the racket.

The number of times this writer has told children when they are learning to play not to do this is more times than there are words in the Oxford English Dictionary! Furthermore, the number of times I've then explained that it worked for Nobuhiko Hasegawa would fill the number of words of any language in any dictionary!

**Asian Success**

In addition to his successes at World Championships, he also won a host of Asian titles.


In 1966, 1968, 1970 and 1972 he was on the team that won the Men's Team title at the Asian Championships. In 1966 he was an integral part of the team that won the Men's Team event at the Asian Games. In 1974 he won Men's Doubles with Mitsuru Kohno.

**Dedicated**

He was totally dedicated to table tennis, his only other real interest being classical music. In Japan he became known as "Popeye" after the cartoon character that, when he ate spinach, had great strength and rippling muscles.

A graduate of the Aichi School of Technology after his playing days were over, he worked for the Tamasu Butterfly Company in Tokyo, writing technical articles for their publications.

Nobuhiko Hasegawa was a true sportsman, a superb athlete with a will to win. He is sadly missed.

---

**In Memoriam: Alan Reich (1930-2005)**

By Tim Boggan

Alan Reich was well known as having "founded the Paralysis Cure Research Foundation," as being the "president of the National Paraplegia Foundation, and founder of the "National Task Force on Disability." He'd been an All-American in track and field at Dartmouth, but after he'd served as an outstanding officer in the Army, a 1962 swimming accident made him a quadriplegic.

Because Alan had become deputy assistant secretary of state for educational and cultural affairs, he connected with our table tennis world. In promoting the January 21-23, 1972 Eastern Open Tournament, Director Bob Kaminsky invited various Maryland and Washington, D.C. officials to attend the matches, and Alan was one of those who did so.

Then in April, when the Chinese "Ping-Pong Diplomacy" team played against the U.S. at Maryland's Cole Field House, Bob hosted a buffet reception for visiting dignitaries, among them Alan, U.N. Russian representative, First Secretary Krasheninnikov, and President Leonard Milton of People to People Sports.

Afterwards, Alan graciously thanked Bob for providing tickets for him and his family, and proclaimed the occasion "a great day for table tennis and for U.S.-China relations."

Alan later founded the National Organization On Disability (NOD), and just this past July "President Bush presented him with the George Bush Medal for his work on behalf of people with disabilities."
In Memoriam: Mayo Rae Rolph (1919-2005)

Mayo Rae Rolph was the Northwest’s brightest hope when, as a 17-year-old high school senior from Portland, OR, she came all the way to Chicago’s Lake Shore Athletic Club to try out for the 1937 U.S. World Team. With her penhold topspin game, she had a great chance, but in the 10-woman round robin she lost a key 15-19, 16 match to Dolores Kuenz that necessitated a play-off for the team’s third and last expense-paid position. But again she lost—a 22-16 killer to Jay Purves. Kuenz and Purves made the Team along with World Champion Ruth Aarons.

A 4th woman could be added to the U. S. Team—a Team that would make History by winning both the Swaythling and Corbillon Cups. Wealthy Emily Fuller paid her own way. and encouraged by the experience became the 1938, 1939 U.S. Champion. Said Mayo’s father to his daughter, “I know how much you want to go, but I’m just a candy store owner. I haven’t got the money to send you.” More than half a century later, Mayo told me, “There was never much candy in the house.”

Another chance to represent the U.S. came three years later, in 1940, when a U.S. Team was picked to go to Japan for “Friendship Matches,” and Mayo became a last-minute substitute for Mildred Wilkenson who’d become pregnant and didn’t want to make the trip. They played in Tokyo, Osaka, Nogoya, and Hiroshima to thousands of spectators and before Japanese royalty.

Team Captain Bill Gunn said that the Team received many gifts that “shipping them home became quite a problem.” Mayo said, “Our Japanese hosts were exceedingly kind to us. She particularly liked “a box of oriental make-up cream and a pair of exquisitely carved wooden shoes” she was given. In general, she said, the Japanese women “have a charming poise. They are always sweet, charming and natural. They smile a great deal and laugh softly. As in many foreign countries, the woman’s place is strictly in the home. The men are considered socially superior to the women.” In this unequal-partner connection, Gunn reported that, “In many Japanese cities it is against the law to play mixed doubles.”

At the 1941 National’s, Mayo lost in the quarter’s to the winner Sally Green (later Prouty). Four years later she was Mayo Barrett, wife of a Baptist minister’s son, playing just a bit in the Chicago area, for I believe she was getting her Master’s degree in Philosophy at the University of Chicago, perhaps while teaching at Shimer College in Mount Carroll.

Then in 1952 she turns up at Columbus, Ohio where she wins the Ohio Closed final and I don’t—and neither of us remember talking to the other. Soon, however, just as her artist friend Jack McLarty (also a longtime table tennis player) returned to Portland to teach at the Museum of Art School there, so did Mayo return to her roots. Through the ensuing years, she was a generous supporter of Jack, and had the most important collection of his work

She’d marry again, would be Mayo Rae Rolph Roy, and would teach at Clackamas Community College where in the late ’70’s she’d start a table tennis club and play socially. When years later I became interested in doing my History, I corresponded with her, talked with her on the phone and once in person when she came to the 1992 Midland, Michigan U.S. Open to see me with her scrapbook, for she was very interested in having her table tennis life preserved.

In 1995 on her way to China she stopped in Tokyo to see Butterfly’s Hikosuke Tamasu, who’d met her 55 years earlier, and he surprised and pleased her by saying she was famous and made quite a fuss over her. How nice to be recognized, eh?

During the last five years when she began getting my History books we’ve kept up with each other, and I note with more awareness now that for quite a while Mayo was having trouble breathing. But it was only by accident, through a McLarty newsletter, that I learned of her death—this after I’d called her only recently.

Her portrait by Jack, shown here, has been given a remembered place in Linfield College, the alma mater of her youth.

USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE • January/February 2006

Board Motions & Votes

Email Votes, October, 2005 (none in November)

Motion One: Move to approve that the incumbent USATT employees shall not be fired until the issue of Staff is over and the Personnel Committee is established.

Motion by Jiing Wang; Second by Robert Blackwell

Motion Passed: 7-3-0-3

In Favor: Robert B, Dell S, Khoo N, Barney R, Jiing W, Willy L, George B; Against: Tim B, Sheri P, Tong L

Abstain: None; No vote: Whitney P, Ashu J, Lily Y

Motion Two: Move to appoint Dennis Davis and Willy Leparulo as Co-Chairs of the Personnel Committee.

Motion by Sheri Pittman; Second by Robert Blackwell

Motion Passed: 11-0-0-2

In Favor: Tim B, Robert B, Dell S, Sheri P, Khoo N, Barney R, Jiing W, Whitney P, Willy L, Ashu J, George B; Against: None; Abstain: None; No vote: Tong L, Lily Y

Motion Three: Moved to approve the Minutes of the September 23-24, 2005 Board of Directors Meeting.

Motion by Tim Boggan; Second by Sheri Pittman

Motion Did Not Pass: 2-7-0-4

In Favor: Dell S, Whitney P; Against: Robert B, Khoo N, Barney R, Jiing W, Tong L, Ashu J, Willy L; Abstain: None; No vote: George B, Tim B, Sheri P, Lily Y

USATT Board of Director’s Motions

Colorado Springs, Nov. 11-12, 2005

Board Members Present: Sheri Pittman (SP), Tong Lee (TL), Tim Boggan (TB), Robert Blackwell (RB), Barney D. Reed (BR), Dell Sweeris (DS), Willy Leparulo (WL), and Khoo Nguyen (KN).

Board Members Absent: Jiing Wang, George Brathwaite, Lily Yip, Ashu Jain, and Whitney Ping.

Motion 1: Move that the Board express a Vote of Confidence in Dorul Gheorge as USATT Executive Director.

Proposed by: TL; seconded by TB.

Passed: 5-2-1. Opposed: BR, WL; Abstained: RB. (Note: Robert wants it made clear that, though he doesn’t think Dorul’s right for the position of E.D., he does have confidence in his ability to successfully develop elite athletes.)

Motion 2: Move that the Board approve the 2006 Budget.

Proposed by: TL; seconded by TB.

Passed: 7-0-1. Abstained: RB.

Motion 3: Move that the Board accept the New Referee Requirements: “Effective January 2007 all referees for USATT tournaments must be qualified as a Certified Referee, National Referee or International Referee. Specific level requirements will be covered in the Tournament Guide.”

Proposed by: TB; seconded by KN; Passed: 6-1 (RB out of the room).

Motion 4: Move that the New York International Table Tennis Training Center be designated the first USATT Regional Training Center.

Proposed by: TB; seconded by TL; Passed: 6-1 (RB out of the room).

Motion 5: Move that in the Retirement section of the Human Resources Policy Manual the Benefits be changed from:

“All full-time employees shall be eligible to participate in USA Table Tennis’ Tax Sheltered Annuity (TSA) program. After one year of employment, USA Table Tennis will contribute a 50% match equal to the employee’s Monthly TSA contribution. Employer match contribution amounts are subject to annual review during the budgeting process.”

Proposed by: TL; seconded by RB; Passed: 7-0-1; Abstained: WL.

Proposed by: TL; seconded by RB; Passed: 7-0-1; Abstained: WL.
Do You Have a Better Chance to Upset a Stronger Player with the 11-Point Rule?

By Fangxing "Fran" Li, fli6@utk.edu

Do we have a better chance to upset a stronger player under the best of five, 11-point rule than under the old best of three, 21-point rule? Most people probably agree that the chance is bigger. But, the real question is, by how much? Is it really considerable? I guess few people have seriously thought about how much the actual benefit is. This article will tell you the actual increased chance for a lower-rated player to make an upset.

To make it easy to understand, let’s assume there are two players, A and B. We also need to assume that the results of their games are only related to their skill levels. Other factors, like home court advantage, mental toughness, familiarity with opponent’s playing style, etc., are all neutral to the results. Also we assume the players always play at their best.

Next, I will show you how to calculate the actual chance in percentage for an underdog player to make an upset in a best of five, 11-point games match. Although a rigorous mathematical formulation exists, it is extremely complicated to do so. Instead, I developed a computer program to simulate the outcome of a game. The program was based on Monte Carlo simulation, a statistical method to simulate random process. It starts at 0:0 for the scores of A and B. Then, the program “asks” the player to “play” for the next point. To determine the winner, the program generates a random number between 0 and 1 and compares it with PWSP of A, say 45%. If the number is less than 0.45, then the program believes A will win the point. Otherwise, B wins the point. We don’t consider the serve as a factor. In fact, the serving technique is part of the skills and is considered in PWSP implicitly. Plus, both players have equal opportunities to serve. The same process will be repeated for more points till a player wins an 11-point set. The process for a set will be repeated for more sets till a player wins 3 sets out of 5 first.

As you can tell from my procedure, you probably think the random number is very critical to determine the final results of a game. That is correct. To be fair, a huge number of Monte Carlo simulations are usually needed. In my test, I repeated the simulation one million times to get unbiased results. Table 1 shows the chance for Player A (the underdog player) to upset Player B under 11-point, 5-set games, with respect to different PWSP of A against B. The table also lists the chance of different results (3-0, 3-1, etc).

Table 1. Wins for a underdog player in 11-point, 5-set games

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PWSP of A</th>
<th>Wins</th>
<th>Losses</th>
<th>3-0</th>
<th>3-1</th>
<th>3-2</th>
<th>3-3</th>
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<td>9.8</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>15.6</td>
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Table 2. Wins for a underdog player in 21-point, 3-set games

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To evaluate the increased chance of upsetting a better player, I did the simulation for the same A and B players for a best 2 out of 3 games in 21-point games. Table 2 shows the chance for the underdog Player A to upset B in this case. The difference of winning percentage, i.e., the difference between the second columns in Tables 1 and 2, is shown in Figure 1. The curve follows a lognormal distribution shape, the same as the USA household income.

I also did the simulation for the case, typically in international competitions, that the rule is changed from best of five with 21-point games to best of seven with 11-point games. The result is sketched in Figure 2. It is quite obvious that it is very similar to Figure 1.

Conclusions
The 11-point game benefits an underdog player by 2.2% at most (in 5/11 games as opposed to 3/21 games, Figure 1) in terms of winning percentage. That maximum benefit happens when the PWSP's of A and B are 45-55%. It is roughly equivalent to 17:21. So, if someone can consistently beat you at 21:17 in the old days, you will get the most benefit, but only by 2.2%, with the new 5/11 rule as opposed to the old 3/21 rule when you play against him or her today. For the case that the rule is changed from 5/21 to 7/11, the biggest benefit is slightly more, 3.8%, when PWSP's of A and B are 46-54% as Figure 2 shows.

Some may disagree and believe that there seem to be more upsets in the 11-point games. I believe this is a wrong intuition in general. Even if this is true in some scenarios, the primary reason should be that the stronger player isn't familiar with the weaker player. As long as they have played enough against each other, the first-meet advantage for an underdog player will be gone.

Finally, I want to tell Mr. Sharara that the purpose of increasing uncertainty of this sport with the 11-point game is probably doomed to be a non-success. In addition, it changes the rhythm of many players and fans that had played under the 21-point rule for dozens of years.

Biography
Fangxing “Fran” Li is a long-time table tennis fan who started to play when he was seven. His highest USATT rating was 1748. He is currently an Assistant Professor at The University of Tennessee at Knoxville. He was a Principal Engineer in electric power systems at ABB Inc., Raleigh, NC before joining UT in August 2005.

Figure 1. The increased chance of upsetting a stronger player from the 3/21 rule to the 5/11 rule.

Figure 2. The increased chance of upsetting a stronger player from the 5/21 rule to the 7/11 rule.

History of U.S. Table Tennis
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In Praise of the Old, Experienced Seasoned Umpires
By “Dr. Azmy”

As a player, one does not think much about what is going on around him or her. The player walks into the arena and the playing area is all set, the air conditioning is working, the water is there, the registration desk, control desk, computers, balls, match cards, etc., are all there.

At the table, there is a person sitting there, sometimes two. One of them checks your racket, name, number and shirt color, and then checks the net, makes the toss, and asks the players for their choices of racket, name, number and shirt color. Then the official checks the net, makes the toss, gets the players to choose their racket, name, number and shirt color.

How did this person come there? Who assigned him/her to be an umpire? What are his/her qualifications?

These people are the umpires, the unknown soldiers. They volunteer their time to serve and help the sport. They most often spend some money out of their pockets, regardless of the compensation they get. They sacrifice their vacation time to leave their jobs to come to the tournaments. Sad as it may seem, we only hear about umpires when one of them makes a mistake in a tournament. But we do not hear or recognize the thousands of matches the umpires perform adequately and successfully.

The Rules/Officials’ Committee (ROC) keeps a check on these umpires. This committee makes sure that umpires are qualified persons who know the rules of the game and can apply them fairly. There are a series of exams, interviews, and evaluations that take place as the umpires develop.

The USATT Official’s Committee was one of the first ones in the world to establish a process to build up qualified umpires. In fact the ITTF considered that process as a model later on when they started their own.

A person has to take an exam to be a Club Umpire. Upon passing that exam he will be assigned matches in local tournaments. He has to accumulate a number of matches in sanctioned tournaments. It is the responsibility of the Tournament Referee to observe and evaluate the umpire’s performance. One problem we have in developing umpires is the unwillingness of referees to assign them matches.

After one year the umpire can take the regional umpire test. Upon passing this the umpire can umpire in all the major tournaments in his/her region. After another year and additional recorded matches, the umpire can take the National Umpire exam. As the level goes up, so does the difficulty of the exam. The National exam is a written exam followed by an oral interview. National umpires can umpire in all the national tournaments and some international ones.

After two years and evaluations by the officials committee, he can be recommended to take the International Umpire exam. That exam is an ITTF administered exam. Upon passing it the umpire is eligible to umpire in International Tournaments.

The ITTF Umpires and Referee Committee (URC) recently added an additional step, the Blue Badge Umpire. That requires more time and a written exam and match evaluations. That badge is now considered for umpiring at World and Olympic competitions.

It is a long process to become an international umpire. Most of us begin the process as we get older and less skilled as players, and can afford the time away from our jobs. In several international competitions, notably the World Junior Championships, the umpire invitations specify umpires under 40 years of age. Most of our international umpires are well past 50 years old. We will continue to nominate our umpires regardless of age.

Although we will continue to support our current umpires, we need younger umpires to step up to the plate and advance to the higher umpire ranks. International umpires have a much better chance of attending a World Championships or other foreign tournaments than they would as players.

Let us go to another subject that has been circulated lately about a new rule that allows wheelchair players to better compete in regular events. This is an email I received.

Q: If a wheelchair player is playing doubles with a standing able-bodied player, what are the rules for their play?

A: The players must alternate shots, otherwise the standing athlete could make most returns. This would be unfair to the opposing pair and also to the player in the wheelchair, who may be deprived of fully participating in the match. (Note that in wheelchair doubles, the players do not have to alternate shots.)

Miracle on Hawthorne Lane
By Ray Filz

Sometimes reading non-interesting looking articles can pay off. It paid off miraculously here in Charlotte recently. The article was related to amateur sports. In the article a man by the name of Larry Huelsman was mentioned. He labeled himself as an amateur sports enthusiast, but I will label him the “The Cartridge Man,” since from its German origins, “huelle” means a cartridge, as from a bullet.

After calling Larry, I asked if he would meet with John Pahl (Charlotte TT Club President), and me. Our dilemma was this … we did not have enough places to play. Here in Charlotte you play second fiddle to basketball. And if it isn’t basketball, it’s volleyball. At the meeting with Larry, we mentioned that we only had one facility to play at on a Sunday afternoon. However, we were given a two-hour night after that, at a private recreation center in South Carolina. (For non-geography majors, Charlotte is in North Carolina.) This was arranged by a friend of John’s, who is an aquatic instructor at the facility. Larry took this information to Wayne Weston, a heavy hitter in Parks and Recreation, saying “Hey! We’ve got these table tennis guys having to go to South Carolina to play.” From that, we got a Thursday night at a rec center called Elon. So presently, we meet Sunday’s at Tuckaseegee, Monday’s in SC and Thursday’s at Elon.

So what about the “miracle”? In that badminton was also the red-headed stepchild in local sports, Larry and Wayne discussed our having our own facility. Yes, our own facility. Badminton representatives along with John and I met with Mr. Weston where he offered us a facility at Hawthorne Lane. The catch was this … we had to take over the entire facility, including the burden of all expenses. Naturally, we accepted.

From this, we had to meet with a local neighborhood group and make a presentation to the Mecklenburg County Board of Commissioners, after which we were given the “green light.” The final step was more or less a rubber stamp appearance by the Mecklenburg County attorney before the city council on May 17. Our ten-year contract began on July 1.

As you can imagine, most of the Charlotte Table Tennis Club members were anxious to begin play in July. This agreement may be the first for table tennis in the sense of taking an existing parks and recreation facility and having it as our own. Of course, we will not own the building or surrounding property, but we can still claim it as our own. Perhaps it will be a model for a club in another city, and the miracle can be repeated.
presents the
Third Annual
Table Tennis Challenge

Watch in Awe! Compete with Skill! Enjoy the Sport of Table Tennis!

Don't miss THE featured table tennis event of the Arnold Fitness Weekend: The International Table Tennis Challenge filmed on Saturday, March 4, 2006 for ESPN! Check out male and female Olympians, U.S. players and International Champions. Invited players include Jan-Ove Waldner, Liu Guozheng, Aleksandar Karakasevic, Thomas Keinath, Ilia Lupulesku, Li Ju, Thiago Monteiro, Mark Hazinski, Adam Hugh, Barney Reed, Georgina Pota, Biba, Elie, and Latin America's sensational Table Tennis Twins Maria Alejandra Soles and Maria Jose Soles. Additional players may be added.

Challenge your table tennis skills with events for the entire family! Collegiate competition on Friday; USATT tournament events on Saturday; Youth events on Sunday. And don't miss Table Tennis Skill Tests throughout the weekend! You may enter on-line for these events at www.killerspin.com or visit www.arnoldsportsfestival.com.

For more information email: ehogshead@killerspin.com

TICKET INFORMATION: www.ticketmaster.com or call 614-431-3600
Thanksgiving. Ah, again, a hopeful gathering time for all to benefit from President Richard Lee’s 8th NTTA Stiga-sponsored North American Team Championships. Contributors to the harvest? Start with Tournament Director Fong Hsu (software mentor, overseer of 140 Stiga Expert Tables and certainly an Optimum number of unboxed balls). Then include Tournament Director Wendy Troy whose 190 very diverse teams have the usual eclectic names—Diamonds International (Team rating: 3226); Hard Bats and Balls; Knuckleface Jones!; What Would Bollo Do?; Someone Sponsor Us (Team rating: 3578); Three Jews and a Vegan; Fahoogwogads; and (Blimey!) UK Royal Navy (A, B, and C, all 3 English teams looking spiffy in Stiga outfits).

Be sure not to forget the family-friendly Tournament Staff of the Lees, the Troys, the Palmars, and the Nguen’s (well, at least Tom). And just in case you’ll ever have an on-court need, better give rotating Tournament Referee Bill Walk and his merry band of Umpires a nod (“Let’s go!” is perfectly acceptable encouragement; but “Vamos! Vamos, muchacho!” might draw a yellow card, for who knows what in a foreign language is being conveyed to the player). Also, it’s always fun to listen to Alan Williams on the mike—as NATT’s Media/Marketing mustachioed modulator, he’s fond of turning a phrase. (This sport is so full of tactics, so fast, he tells a Baltimore Sun reporter—it’s “like chess on amphetamines.”)

As for sponsors, could you find one with a better attitude than Pilgrim-like Pioneer Mitch Rothfleisch (13% off, 20% off, 30% off, $200 off—it would seem his Stiga/Banda Specials are Folly indeed). Dave Sakai’s Senoda Printing—they’re such fulfillment specialists they had the NTTA President himself playing on their team—with graphic results. Schrager on their team, too? Nope, this one’s with West and Lane, a sponsoring commercial real estate brokerage firm. Of course Gerflor gives the higherrated players the red carpet treatment, their Taraflex floor—firm footing there, as with State Mortgage. Finally there’s seafood at Phillips’s Harbor restaurant where whatever’s fishy (“You’ve played great, now eat great”) can be nappedkined off as it were with an added touch from the Designer Fragrance and Cosmetic Co.

So all’s in readiness? The Convention Center’s security is tight, the players aren’t? Since there’s little chance to recoup entry fees and expenses, many here will relax, play for fun. There are of course some money prizes—$1,200 for the winning Women’s Team; much, much more for the Men: $10,000 for 1st, $4,000 for 2nd, $1,000 for 3rd-4th, $650 for 5th-8th (less the $500 entry fee for a 3-man team gives $50 apiece left over for a Fri./Sat. lunch not likely to be indulged in at the Hyatt Regency Tournament Hotel). Awarded too will be the player trophies, dwarfed next to a Division-won Expert table (that in the future will encourage players on a team to represent the same Club?).

The first and foremost entry in this tournament (an archangel named Larry made the Announcement) was the team of God the Father, Jesus the Son, and, playing as well as the others, their close kin, the Holy Ghost. Their Club: Trinity. Their Event: Senior’s. Their Rating: The Best. Their Address: Heaven. Their Phone: Just talk, we’ll listen. Their Entry Fee: We’ll pay on arrival, have faith. Pay on arrival? That did it—sorry, Larry, write a high-minded editorial; this entry, outdoing, well, almost anything by the Boo’s Brothers, was rejected.

Accepted, and seeded out from the Friday Preliminaries, are the four top-rated teams: (1) New York Athletic Club (Feng Zhe, Zliti Hong Bin, and David Zilliang); (2) Canada 2008 (Zhang Wilson Peng, Bence Csaba, and Pradeeban Peter-Paul); (3) Allstars (Han Xiao, Adam Hugh, and Li Yuxiang); (4) Canada 2006 (Qiang Shen; Homayoun Kamkar-Parsi; and Xavier Therien).

This year’s format to decide the Prize-Money Winners is the same as last year’s. To begin, the teams in the 16 Preliminary Groups are carefully arranged by top to bottom ratings (an accumulated
total of their 3 best player-ratings) via a snake system folding back on itself (the 16th and 17th-rated teams are in Group 16 and the 1st, 32nd, and 33rd teams are in Group 1, and so on). The rule of play is that each team tie consists of three members playing, if need be, all three opposing players until one team scores 5 match wins out of a possible 9. When an individual, playing 11-point games, takes three games from his opponent he wins the match.

The 16 Group winners from the Preliminaries join the four exempt teams to form a 20-team Division A. Though other B, C, D...Division play continues as well, I’m concerned here only with those teams who at least theoretically have a chance to win the Championship.

These 20 A teams are then flipped into 4 round robins of 5 teams each (1A, 2A, 3A, 4A)—with each round robin group headed by one of the original four top seeds. From each of these four Division A round robins, two of the five teams advance to single elimination play, thus giving us a quarter’s, semi’s, and final. In the semi’s and final, however, the rule of play changes. Now the three players on a team play not a maximum of 9 matches but a maximum of 5, with the 3rd match played by the player who will play only this one match in the tie. Should the tie go all 5 matches, both of the other two players will play both of their eligible opponents. Now, however, the 11-point games are best 4 out of 7.

Got it? Ready?

**Preliminary Play**

For the Prelim upset in Group 11, key into shop.codesociety.com (yes, that’s the 6763-rated team’s title) and you’ll find a bloody site, for though the society 5-2 gunned down the 7048-rated Viet Gang 2, shots spattered everywhere. Wounded only vicariously were Changping Duan and Charlene Xiaoying Liu who sat out this tie while their son Jim dropped two matches, a particularly nasty 13-11 in the 5th one to Anh Tuan Nguyen. (Later, though, Jim will have a good win over Ben Johnson who’s been under Coach Marty Prager’s wing at the Coral Springs Chinese Culture Association Center where they have the largest Chinese library in the country.) Anh shot it out in two more 13-11 in the 5th matches, dying twice—to Stephen Yeh who also beat Steve Nguyen 11-8 in the 5th, and to Napoleon “Rocky” Reyes. Originally from the Philippines, not France, Napoleon, er, Rocky, stopped Nguyen, then Tuan Anh Tran in 5.
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The Prelim upset in Group 14 wasn’t much of an upset, since, as happened last year, the Baltimore Brawlers did the manhandling. They 5-1 downed a Quebec team headed by veteran Canadian International Chris Xu, Baltimore star, Trinidad Men’s Champion, 18-year-old Khaleel Asgarali, intent on pursuing a career as a professional player in Europe (he’s been periodically going to the Training Center in Ottawa where he feels he has better opportunities than he would have in the States), was sidelined with a sore shoulder. But his father Nazruddin ("Oscar") Asgarali, a member of the Trinidad National Team from 1974-89, contributed two wins, an 11-8-in-the-5th close one over Olivier Rieutord. Nigeria-trained Latire ("Larry") Abbas, also brought home two winners, rallying from down 2-0 to beat Jean-Philippe Gagnon. John Wetzler, splitting matches, saw one slip away when Rieutord 9-11, 8 came back from a two-game deficit for Quebec’s lone win.

There was also a Prelim upset in Group 16. The Senoda team (Dave Sakai; former World # 88 Ricky Seemiller; and former U.S. Junior Champion Richard Lee) 5-1 downed a Suguru Araki-encouraged, California-based Samurai team—Ferro chemical engineer Kazuhiro Kamada; landscaper Yutaka Takahashi; and pharmaceutical purveyor Hiroyuki Takada. But then, with Seemiller and Lee unarmed, unable to swing without pain (where now were Takada’s Salonpas pain-relieving patches?), and with would-be team mainstays Todd Sweeers out with a bad back and Eric Boggan not free to walk away from his holiday-weekend postal route, the 5-0 bite was the Big Apple’s, not the other way round.

A near Prelim upset occurred in Group 8: the Chengdu City Women’s team 5-4 barely beat the Canadian Women. Canada’s Chiu Wennin made a valiant effort with 2-game wins over 18-year-old Sechuan player/coach Fu Shu and 24-year-old Guangzhou player/coach Chen Jiao, but she dropped a 12-10 in the 4th swing match to Tang Wei, a grad student in Public Administration at Shanghai’s Jiao Tong University where the famous Liu Guoliang is majoring in Human Resources Management. Since the best the Yuen sisters, Sara and Stephanie, could do was add a match apiece, Canada fell just short.

In Group 15, the Viet Gang 1 came close to losing to the Budapest Malev Club coached by Laszlo Vargas whose son Zoltan was on their winning team here with Fan Yi Yong and Ferenc Pazsi five years ago. Sponsoring in part by Hungarian Airlines, they’re the best team in the Hungarian B League and have with them Danny Schaffer, the Hungarian Cadet Boys Champ.

In the Viet’s 5-4 win, the two tie-deciding matches after Hungary’s Soma Fekete had edged John Thach Tran, 15-13 in the 4th, were Loc Ngo over Istvan Horvath, 11-9 in the 5th, and Tran over Miklos Kekedi, coming from two games behind to win the 3rd at 18-16 and change the course of the tie. Strangely the Hungarian just didn’t seem to care. In the 7th match, at 2-2 in games with Tuan Le, Horvath says he has a cramp and can’t continue. Hence the Malev Club players will go into Division B where they will eventually win an Expert table and very likely not ship it back to Budapest.

Among advancers, another New York team, Big Apple, won 5-3 over Canada 2016. De Tran brought in two wins; former Iranian
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*Recommended Capacity, Balls Recycle

**ROBO-PONG FEATURES CHART**

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National Junior Champion Moshen Javaheri one; and Tahl Leibovitz two, though, having been down 2-0 to Derek Wang, had he lost that match, and his team been 4-4, they might have, gulp, regretted their choice of names. Tahl singled out Coach Javaheri as helping the team pull together when it most counted.

The Alex Aponte Yasah team beat the Pushkin team 5-3— with Simon Shitomakincher winning from Yasah’s Nick Snider the only closely contested match. Simon and wife Irina at the Masters Games in Edmonton in July did quite well for themselves—Irina won the Women’s and with Simon the Mixed 45’s, and Simon was runner-up in the 55’s. Yasah, Aponte tells me, is an exclamationary word meaning “That’s it—Hooray!” Pushkin refers to Svetlana Panich’s favorite Russian poet. Her teammate, Michael Henry, she says, is a live ringer for him.

Puerto Rico 5-2 downed the Scarborough Kings Cobras while Scarborough Coach Leung Ting Wing wished the two swing matches—Juan Revelles over Desmond Wilson, 8 in the 5th; and Hector Berrios over Colin Greenidge, 7 in the 5th could have been reversed.

The California J-Leaguers (J for Japanese?) had no trouble advancing over the Punishers, but Shawn Embleton had an 11-9 in the 5th win over Takayasu Nakata. Earlier, in the Punisher’s advance after being 3-1 down to the Stiga Cadet team, John Bauer had two key wins.

John Leach’s TTT team was upset 5-4 by the Trinidad and Tobago Youth team, and John himself wasn’t too happy about losing to the Northern California players Auria Malek, 9, 17-11, -9, -9 and then Avishty Schmidt, 12-10 in the 5th, again after leading 2-0. But John took those losses very well, and it was a mistake for me to think that, good sport that he is, I might momentarily confuse him with another youthful player whom I’d heard was so disappointed with a loss that he threw his racket into a trash bin—then when he had a change of heart and dug up the offending racket it was covered with Chinese food.

Among non-advancing teams, Penn State 1 (with longtime attendees Hank McCoulum, Ron Lily, Larry Thoman, and Dick Hicks who’s kept a record-book of his individual Team performance since 1957) 5-4 edged the Texas team of Randy Hou, Rick Mueller, and Liu Li Feng.

Another non-advancing team, Mixed Age, fell 5-4 to Three Jews and a Vegan. The Vegan was late arrival Chris Lehman who’d committed to running not one of his 50-mile races but a mere 5-mile one Saturday as a warm-up for his t.t. play that evening. Chris’s teammate Marius Wechsler with 3 wins led the Jews, though not into the Promised 20-team Division A. Peter Li, just turned 12, beat Larry Bavly and Dave Rosenzweig. Bavly, however, mixed the Mixed with 5-game wins over Raghu Nadmichettu and Vladimir Poradich.

Though losing 5-2, the Mixed gave the Texas Wesleyan University team some uneasy moments—for Poradich downed Dinko Kranjac and forced Carlos Chiu into a 12-12 in the 5th anybody’s match; Raghu scored in 5 over Chiu; and Ludovicos Gombos, down 2-0 and down 9-8 in the 5th, was fortunate to eke out a win over the sensational pre-teen Li.

Division A Play

Division 1A couldn’t have been more predictable with the N.Y. Athletic Club routing all four opponents 5-0. Texas Wesleyan, cheered on inimitably by Andre Scott, came second, winning all its other ties 5-1. The only 5-2 tie in the whole Division was Puerto Rico over Yasah with the exciting matches split—Aponte over Revelles 14-12 in the 5th; and Abner Colon over Yosmely Vadillo 12-10 in the 5th. Chopper Colon’s winning finish over lefty attacker Vadillo, former Cuban National Champion, was particularly exciting. It featured a penultimate, followed by a final, surprise when, first, Colon, far back, unexpectedly countered in a winner, then scored on a serve and blindingly fast off-the-bounce follow.

Division 1B saw Canada 2008 win all matches but one, as Auriad Malek had an encouraging win over Bence Csaba. In another tie, against Csaba, Leibovitz did his bit—went from two games up to (-2, -2, -7) 22 points down, groaned, “I am really disabled.” Tahl’s Big Apple took the Avishty Schmidt team (they were minus Whitney Ping who someone said had hurt her ankle), giving up only the De Tran match to Samson Dubilia. Both De and Paul David, who says he’s going to play a series of international tournaments for Guyana, rallied from 2-0 down to (“So bad. So bad.”) darken Avishty’s morning opener—Paul alert to calling a match-turning “Time Out” when down 7-3 in the 5th.

The Women’s Division winner, Newgy Robo Women (an attractive? unattractive? name), upset the Big Apple. Countering Alex Perez’s dominating matches, all three women—Californian Crystal Huang who just became a U.S. citizen, Tawny Banh, and Lily Yip—did in Tahl who’d complained earlier (and probably later) about his back. De Tran did manage to beat Huang in 5, but who could blame him if, in losing to Lily and Tawny, he continued to be distracted by his striking, statuesque wife Jennifer at courtside.

Turns out the Robo Women were all too human though, for they lost the tie they needed to advance to the quarter’s. The Schmidt team was the spoiler—with Samson doing heavy duty in winning 3, and Avishty not only beating Yip (whose 8th-match heroes then kept her team alive), but taking the 9th match from Huang 11-9 in the 4th, 11-7 in the 5th. This result brought a 3-way 2-2 tie easily broken in the Big Apple’s favor.

New Jersey didn’t win any ties but, even without wanted teammates Dickie Fleisher and Ashu Jain, they had some fun moments. Eyal Adini played Avishty a re-match—last time they’d met was in an Israeli League 29 years ago. Avishty had to have made some constructive changes in the interim because (1) on finishing that League match with Adini he’d deliberately broken
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continue playing. So maybe he wouldn’t continue playing? As I’d heard repeatedly, and even now reluctantly hush-hush tell you “Off the record.” Barney, preparing to play another tie but not yet in court, appeared on screen in his notorious “T.T. Bad Boy” manner and was soon being interviewed both at the Convention Center and elsewhere. It wasn’t clear to many, but the fact that he was wearing a Hennessy shirt to warm-up in suggested to some that he might have been obliging a sponsor—that is, being filmed with a small nip in private of something other than Gatorade—and that this was frowned on by Convention Security. But such a thought surely went up in smoke, because we all know he couldn’t be stupid enough to impair his play, or let his Team’s chances for at least $650 quarter’s money, go to pot. Nevertheless he disappeared for a while before returning to beat Allstar Li Yuxiang.

Ah, but the damage had been done….What’s that, you want me to put it more clearly? Oh, alright, for allegedly smoking marijuana, Barney was taken away from the Center, spent a night in jail while USATT President Sheri Pittman with considerate phone calls was doing her best to look after him. Of course there would be the inevitable repercussions. For without Barney, and undermined psychologically, this Unit lost their chance for advancement—were defeated by Canada’s Juniors 5-2. Pierre-Luc Hinse beat both Keith Alban, whom someone described as a t.t. mercenary (have racket; will play for pay) and Ben Johnson who, probably feeling a win just wasn’t in the cards, also lost to Canadian Junior Champion Guo Peng whose focus is now primarily on school.

Hinse, 18, is aiming to try for a career in table tennis, and will train in France at their National Center that produced this year’s European Junior Team Champions. They have two or three coaches there covering every training session, and though as an “outsider” Pierre-Luc (who also had a win in the Allstar tie over Adam Hugh) will have to learn a lot by himself, he feels it’s a great opportunity. Steve Berger’s Apple 1 team didn’t win a match, but Steve himself with his Golden Age hard bat did well to go 5 with Hinse’s teammates, Guo and Paulo Chira (whom he lost to 11-9 in both the 4th and 5th games).

Canada 2006, as expected, came first in Division 1D, with only one loss—when New York’s Shao Yu rallied from 2-0 down to beat (15-year-old?) Qiang Shen, current Canadian Doubles Champ with Chira. Qiang, who came to Canada from China a year and a half ago, has a perplexingly cool, no stress demeanor. Shao’s undercarded N.Y. TTC team 5-2 stoped the Chengdu City Women (they weren’t quite comfortable playing men?) and 5-3 upset Professor Suguru Araki’s Sendai Tohoku Fukuhi University team. Against the Japanese, Shao was in three-match control. Pan Lin lost 11-9 in the 4th to Tatsuya Honda, but had a crucial 13-11 in the 5th win over Takayasa Nakata who, in an 11-9 in the 4th, 11-9 in the 5th tester, had escaped Kim Bong Geun. However, Kim, a Nursing major at Georgia Perimeter College who enjoys teaching kids in Atlanta, had no trouble downing Honda in the conclusive 8th match.

Quarterfinals

So strong were the four originally seeded out teams that not a single quarter’s match was contested.

The NYAC blanked the Canadian Juniors, 5-0, giving up nary a game and but 82 points total. Some intimidation there?

Canada 2006 defeated the Big Apple, 5-1. But that 1 to Tahl Leibovitz, laying claim to “Who’s the best on the Team now!” was gratifyingly important. Thanks to his coach, Dr. Javaheri who, in conjunction with The NYC Hospital for Special Surgery, is currently studying the strokes used in table tennis with the aim of decreasing the chance for injury, Leibovitz kept his cool. In his and the Apple’s one win over Homayoun Kamkar-Parisi, it wasn’t Tahl’s up or down cries that drew a yellow card, it was, viewed from a restrictive official eye, an in-your-face attitude, not with a finger but a sweaty
**AMDT Cup & FIT Open**

**Table Tennis Championships**

USATT Sanctioned 3 Star – March 11-12, 2006
Fashion Institute of Technology
Building A - 7th Avenue at 27th Street
New York, New York 10001-5992

**TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE:** Kerri McTieman, Wayne Chin, Lily Yip

**REFEREE:** Yang Shao Ming, IU

**EQUIPMENT:** 18 Double Fish Tables & Nets, 3 star 40mm orange balls.

**ENTRY DEADLINE:** Entries must be postmarked by March 4, 2006. Late entries will be charged $5.00.

**ENTRY POLICY:** All entries must include payment. Entries may be rejected if space does not permit.

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**RULES:** All USATT laws and regulations apply.

**ELIGIBILITY:** All players must be USATT members or members of an ITTF affiliated association. Bring your membership card or receipt. Non-members MUST join USATT at the tournament. USATT membership: $40/yr, $100/3yr for adults; $20 for juniors or college students; $60/yr for household (2 adults + minors). Adult players who have never been USATT members may purchase a One-Time Tournament Pass for $10.

**PAYMENT:** Make checks payable to Lily Yip Sports, Inc. and send to: 14 Dock Watch Hollow Road, Warren, NJ 07059

**INFORMATION:** Lily Yip 732-748-9712, Email allant796@111311.com or www.doublefish-us.com

**FORMAT:** The U-2000 Teams (Event 12) will consist of 3 players. Each Team tie will be the best of five matches. The format of play will be two singles and than doubles and than two more singles. Event 10 players must be rated under 2000. Each player on a team will only be allowed to play a maximum of 2 matches per team tie. All events marked RR will play in a round robin group of three or four players. The player or team with the best record in the group will advance to the single elimination draw. All matches are 3 out of 5. 11 point games except for the semis and finals of the Open which are best 4 out of 7.

**Fees & Start Times:**

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Event 13 is for High School Students only and Event 14 is for College Students.

**Rules & Events:**

**RR $18**

- Event 2: Under 2350
- Event 3: Under 2150
- Event 4: Under 1850
- Event 5: Jr. Under 12
- Event 6: Jr. Under 16
- Event 7: Community
- Event 8: Women
- Event 9: Under 2200
- Event 10: Under 1600
- Event 11: Under 1300
- Event 12: U-2000 Teams
- Event 13: High School
- Event 14: College Open

**Equipment:**

- **TW2000-05 Robot**: $1,150
  - Plus a Free Gross of Double Fish balls if ordered before June 2006
  - Features:
    - 9 Different Spins - 30 to 100 balls/minute – 4 to 50 meters/sec
    - Feeds to 9 different positions - 130 ball capacity
    - Works with Double Fish balls and has programmable spin control and ball ejection speed.
    - Uses Double Spin Technology to feed no spin, top spin, under spin, and side spin balls and has programmable spin control and ball ejection speed. These functions can not be performed by a single spin machine.
    - There are 9 different feeding positions.
    - Uses Double Spin Technology to feed no spin, top spin, under spin, and side spin balls and has programmable spin control and ball ejection speed. These functions can be performed by a single spin machine.
    - The machine has memory function and can record inputted programs and memory of last plays mode and order. A collection net is used to automatically gather back the balls into the robot's feeding tray.

**Website:** www.amdtrading.us

**AMDT Trading Corporation**
1021 Stockton Street
San Francisco, Ca. 94108
Tel: (888) 269-2638
(415) 397-1532
Email: sales@amdtrading.us
Website: www.amdtrading.us
Blade: Kinetic CF OFF Carbon FL
Rubber: Forehand: Revolution C.O.R. 2.0mm Red
Backhand: Logo 2.1mm Black

I chose andro as my equipment because I know it will help my game and make me more confident with how I play. andio has made my game stronger in every way and I am way more comfortable with how I play.

CHRISTY DIVITA
Age: 11
Homewon: Lancaster, CA
Club: LATTA
Coach: Tawny Banh

My coach helped me pick out the light blade and rubber and I really like how light everything is and it is very easy to control!

Blade: Kinetic CF Carbon OFF+
Rubber: Forehand and Backhand: Maxell

With the newly generated worldwide Global Junior Support program and German Site Champions Success as its patron, andro gives you the opportunity to follow Champions through their coaches.

Ando sponsors the Bakersfield TTC, LATTA and Table Tennis Minnesota junior programs through their coaches.

The Table Tennis Pioneers • ping-pong.com/ttpioneers • North American Distributor for: email: ttpioneers@ping-pong.com, Tel: 1-800-310-PING (7464), Fax: 1-800-301-2014, 6048 Main St. Rialto, CA 92376

ANDRO'S MOST EXCITING SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM EVER!

I chose andro's Kinetic CF Carbon blade because it allows me to play all at a fast pace and control the ball at the same time.

NDOL ROBERT

Blade: Super Core Kinetic OFF
Rubber: Forehand: Revolution C.O.R Backhand: Rocket

I chose andro's Super Core Kevlar carbon racket because it has very good control and is just the right weight. As to Rocket and Revolution CDR, they're soft and good to spin with and I don't need to regulate again and again.

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Backhand: Revolution C.O.R. 2.0mm Black

DANIEL DIVITA
Age: 12
Homewon: Lancaster, CA
Club: LATTA
Coach: Tawny Banh

I use the andro Revolution C.O.R Emotion because the soft rubbers combined with the fast Kevlar CF Carbon allows me to make very fast shots without the loss of control.

Blade: Kinetic CF OFF Kevlar-Carbon FL
Rubber: Forehand: Revolution C.O.R. 2.0mm Red
Backhand: Revolution C.O.R. 2.0mm Black

ERIKA WU
Age: 9
Homewon: Arcadia, CA
Club: LATTA
Coach: Tawny Banh

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Blade: Kinetic CF Carbon OFF+
Rubber: Forehand and Backhand: Maxell

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hand thrust (and a common enough YAAAH!) at his “It didn’t bother me” opponent. Paul David also played a strong but losing 12-14-in-the-4th match against Kamkar-Parsi. Paul got a bad break that last game, for when he was leading 12-11, a topspin exchange brought him a ball that unaccountably failed to bounce and he couldn’t return it.

Canada 2008 blitzed New York 1, 5-0. Shao Yu waged a -7, -8, 9, -9 stubborn fight against Peter-Paul—but the rest of his outmatched team finished -6, -6, -2, -7, -4, -4, -4, -2, -4, -4, -7.

The Allstars downed Texas Wesleyan, the Collegiate winners, 5-1. Talk about college table tennis on the rise, and you certainly gotta think Eric Owens. Captain/Coach Keith Evans, taking over for Christian Lilhanoos, when asked if his team could win, said “The ball is round” — meaning everyone has to adapt to the same playing conditions and of course to the force. Chance. But it would be unthinkable not to play Owens. Alas, however, poor Eric had a bad case of (Tex-Mex?) food poisoning, and, after a night of throwing up, thought he was about to pass out playing Adam Hugh.

Still, the ball is round, and, though Eric loses 11-9 in the 5th to Adam, he does beat Han Xiao. Adam, roaring CHOU! every winning point, also defeats lefty Ludovic Gombos, after being 2-0 down. But it’s Coach Li Yuexing, perpetually exhorting himself with emanations totally foreign to me, who captures the spectators’ imagination. With the Allstars up 4-1, Li, having won the 4th at 9, is in the end-game 5th with Carlos Chiu. Up 9-8, Li is quick to see a forehand opening: 10-8. Then, after again failing to return serve, Li forces Chiu back...and scores with such a perfect drop that, bending in exaggeration (can Carlos get to it?), he turns away from the table knowing Carlos can’t get to it. Then, smiling, extending his hand, he makes a little bow to Chiu.

**Semifinals**

Again the NYAC Chinese-trained team is overpowering—again doesn’t give up a single game. Their Canadian opponents, all based at the Training Center in Ottawa, play, as one of them put it, “just for fun.” Kamkar-Parsi, who at one point after he’d reached a National Team level, quit, didn’t touch a racket for two years, is now going for a Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering at the University of Ottawa; Xavier Therien works full time for a software company; and Qiang Shen, still in high school—well, maybe he’s a little more serious—won a bronze at the recent World Cadet Championship. A 2600 player, he was described as “good when he was under 12.”

Canada 2008 also had a one-sided win—though Csaba gave up a 3rd game to Han (“CHOU!” screams Adam as Han goes up 3-1 in the 4th—which causes Bence, startled, to whirl round to the Allstars bench and say, “Holy [Expletive]!” Canada was lucky not to lose another game when former Chinese National Team member Zhang Wilson Peng, in Canada three years now, prevailed over Adam Hugh 11, 11, 12, 5. In their 1st game, Adam leads 10-9, serves with his usual footstamp, so much the subject of controversy
years ago with officials and my son Eric, but, ohh, mis-serves. In
the 2nd, Adam’s up 10-8, but Wilson with a superb winner ties it up
and, when Adam fails to return serve, goes on to take a 2-up lead.
In the 3rd, Adam’s up 10-4 and, without calling “Time!” loses 1-2-
3-4-5-6 points in a row before just a little late he leads 11-10. At 11-
all, he makes a gorgeous counter, then watches helplessly as Zhang
gets a tying net. Eventually, Wilson bangs in a crushing forehand
to win that game too from Adam.

Li Yuxiang, former Chinese National Champion and former
World Senior Champion in Singles and Doubles, who will be the
Director of the Eastern Regional Training Center at his Flushing,
N.Y. International Club, again got the crowd involved. Fiftyish he
may be, but he shows energy and humor. Peter-Paul’s a good
lobber, but he’s sometimes a foil to Liu’s Ma Lin-like drops which
the aging but energetic showman smilingly hams up for comic
effect. After Li, up 10-8, loses 12-10 in the 4th, a kid comes up to
him, says admiringly, “Good game! Good game!” It’s that kind of
involvement spectators crave for their $15 admission fee.

Final
In the final, Chinese-coached Canada 2008 defeated the New
York Athletic Club, 3-2.

1st Match: 30-year-old penholder Feng Zhe over Bence Csaba.
Feng’s from China of course but played for Bulgaria at the Shanghai
World’s where he was beaten in the 16th’s by semifinalist Michael
Maze. Csaba, now out of his teens, is based at the Austrian
Association’s Training Center and playing in an Austrian league
Sept. to May, then goes to school during the summer. He has a
repertoire of strokes, including a counter-looping forehand and
backhand, and, fast moving, is able to stretch for and get back
balls. Once (shades of Kreanga) he so surprises Feng with a
catapulting backhand that the ball drives the poor guy back and
off-balance to avoid being smacked in the face. Another time,
when he rushes in to pick up a drop, his momentum carries him to
Feng’s side of the table, where, though he might even be behind
Feng, he desperately reverses himself and is in his own backcourt
in time to try to swat a return. But, withal, he doesn’t win a game.

2nd Match: Canada’s Zhang Wilson Peng (who I’d heard
played some furious practice matches with Johnny Huang in
Vancouver) evens the tie by 11-8 in the 6th downing 37-year-old
Zhu Hong Bin, also from China, who’d been recruited with Feng
by teammate David Zhuang. In this match, each player fights for
the forehand advantage—Wilson often swinging ferociously and
Zhu smoooothly following through. With games 1-1, Zhu, down
8-3, recovers to 8-all but loses the end-game exchanges. In the 4th,
with Wilson ever pointing a finger at Zhu that he’s not to fast-
serve him, Zhu again ties up the match. However, in the 5th and 6th
games, Zhang gets off to 5-1 leads and it’s too much for the older
Chinese to overcome.

3rd Match: Pradeeban Peter-Paul, soon to be a university
graduate, and having spent some time in New York practicing
with Wang Chen, 8-6, 5-7, 4, 8 prevails over 4-time U.S. Champ
David Zhuang. It appears, when David’s up 4-1 in the 5th, he’ll
break the lose one, win one pattern of the first four games, but then, m'god, he loses 10 straight! And begins the 6th by serving off. Then, strange game, David goes up 6-2 before he's caught flat-footed, whiffs, decides to call Time, and, from 7-all, loses 11-8.

4th Match: With the favored Zhuang team now in danger of coming up on the short end of the $10,000/$4,000 prize money, Feng Zhe and Zhang go at it with Wilson (wooh! wowie!) blasting unbelievable forehands—at one stage winning 14 out of 16 points. Feng has this high-toss serve in which, before he mis-serves. then he serves badly. long, and Zhu doesn't have time. But suddenly Bence lapses—first and for the audience to give encouraging claps and adulating courtsiders.

Oh, to be young, to train and play abroad, eh?

---

### Stiga North American Teams Results

#### Division One – Final

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<th>Result</th>
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<td>Wilson Zhang Peng (CAN08) d. Zhu Hong Bin (NYAC), 5-9,9-6,7,8</td>
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<td>Pradeeban Peter-Paul (CAN08) d. David Zhuang (NYAC), 8-6,5,7-4,8</td>
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<td>Feng Zhe (NYAC) d. Wilson Zhang Peng (CAN08), 5-3,3-5,9-8,7</td>
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<td>Bence Csaba (CAN08) d. Zhu Hong Bin (NYAC), 7-9,14,6,8</td>
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<td>Wilson Zhang Peng (CAN08) d. Adam Hugh (AS), 11,11,12,5</td>
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<td>Bence Csaba (CAN08) d. Han Xiao (AS), 8,9-5,6,7</td>
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#### Canada 2008 d. Allstars, 3-0

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<td>Wilson Zhang Peng (CAN08) d. Adam Hugh (AS), 11,11,12,5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bence Csaba (CAN08) d. Han Xiao (AS), 8,9-5,6,7</td>
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<td>Feng Zhe (NYAC) d. Peng Guo (CJB), 5,2,4</td>
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<td>David Zhuang (NYAC) d. Pierre-Luc Hinse (CIB), 10,8,7</td>
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<td>Zhu Hong Bin (NYAC) d. Paulo Chira (CJB), 7,5,2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feng Zhe (NYAC) d. Pierre-Luc Hinse (CIB), 7,5,5</td>
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#### Allstars d. Texas Wesleyan University, 5-1

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adam Hugh (AS) d. Eric Owens (TWU), 7,7-4,6,9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Han Xiao (AS) d. Carlos Chiu (TWU), 7,6,18</td>
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#### Division Two: Malev Budapest (Daniel Schaffer, Miklos Kekedi, Istvan Horvath) d. Viet Gang 2 (Tuan Anh Tram, Anh Tuan Nguyen, Steve Nguyen), 5-3.

#### Division Three: Fahoogwads (Joseph Cochran, A.J. Brewer, Barbara Wei, George Brewer) d. The TTT Team (John Leach, Taju Oladokun, Eric Finkelstein, Scott Endicott), 5-0.

#### Division Four: Quadruple Threat (Francois Charvet, Thomas Yost, John Mar, Tom Orlik) d. Stiga Cadet (Michael Mast, Joseph Wang, Justen Yao), 5-0.

#### Division Five: Someone Sponsor Us (Martin Del Vecchio, Raphael Hillebrand, Eric Dang, David Del Vecchio) d. The Gyre (Ann Alvarez, Wayne Ming Chin, Jeff Williams, Jack Lam), 5-2.

#### Division Six: Quebec Junior Girls (Cynthia Paulin, Tang Qi, Marie-Andrée Levesque, Emmanuelle Lavoie) d. Wildcats (Charles Jackson, Rodney Linn Peffer, James Martin II, Ivar De Jong), 5-2.

#### Division Seven: Spin to Win (John Muhich, Geoff Wyatt, Pinaki Ghosh) d. Past Perfects (Jay Jones, Ralph Jones, Andrew Muenchow, Vivek Koppikar), 5-4.

#### Division Nine: Loop to Kill (Joc Griffin, Oscar Ramirez, Toby Kutler, Fernando Ramirez) d. Konstant Loopers (Keehan Mokhtari, Kian Mokhtari, Rohan Gilkes), 5-0.

#### Division Ten: Howard University (Aymoukun Adeleye, David Terrelonge, Babasola Adeleye, Gerik Whittington) d. Wilma Refugees #3 (Kevin Lam, Brian Lam, Malcolm Ah Kun), def.

#### Division Eleven: Scarborough Kings I (William Truong, Kenneth Conception, Johnny Chan, Xihao Lou) d. IBM Watson TTC (He Jiangtuo, Zhang Xiaolan, Albert Chieue, Zhang Zhibo, Alan Bivens), 5-4.
Get a Grip! The Forehand, Backhand and Neutral Shakehand Grips

By Sean O’Neill – 2-time USA Olympian & 5-time USA Men’s Singles Champion
Courtesy of About.com - Table Tennis/Ping-Pong • Photos by Sean O’Neill ©2005

Picture 1: Neutral Grip

When holding the paddle shakehands there are many variations. Sometimes we say a person is using more of a forehand grip or backhand grip. With the neutral grip, the racket lines up with the thinnest part of the wrist. In the image above you will see a neutral grip when viewing the angle of the paddle in relationship to the wrist. This position will allow for a balanced backhand and forehand stroke. When serving it is very common to modify the grip somewhat to allow for more spin or wrist action. I strongly recommend that beginners try to adhere to the neutral grip when starting out, except when serving, as this will correct many flawed strokes from the beginning.

Picture 2: Forehand Grip

The forehand grip is characterized by a slight turn of the top of the paddle towards your thumb, so the top of the blade rotates left (for a right-hander). This creates a small amount of space between the index finger and the rubber surface. This grip allows for extremely heavy topspins on the forehand side and a more closed angle on the backhand side when the tip is up. Some world-class players that have used this grip very successfully are Mikael Appelgren (SWE) and Ma Wenge (CHN). Backhand counteracting or looping take more skill with this grip due to the range of motion of the wrist being a bit constricted.

Picture 3: Backhand Grip

The backhand grip is characterized by a slight turn of the top of the paddle towards your knuckles, so the top of the blade rotates right (for a right-hander). While the index finger is firmly planted on the rubber surface there is now a slight gap between the thumb and the handle. This grip allows for very good control on the backhand side for loops or smashes and even short pushes, but often requires a forehand that needs to be taken earlier than usual due to the closed angle of the paddle when the tip is up. Often players that use a backhand grip will have sidespin on their forehand loops. They might also have difficulty flipping short balls on their forehand side because of the awkward wrist angle.

Picture 4: Neutral Grip

For the forehand view of a backhand oriented grip you will see the handle touches a smaller portion of the fingers and the thumb is almost resting on the rubber surface. This grip is also good for blocking on the backhand side as well as backhand looping, especially off of underspin.

Picture 5: Forehand Grip

Here you can see the thumb and other fingers as they are placed on the handle with a neutral grip. The key to this grip is to hold the paddle firm but not to choke it! If someone were to try to pull the paddle out of your hand they should be able to. When you have a light, but firm grip you will have a great range of motion for your wrist which is paramount to having good feel and good control.

Picture 6: Backhand Grip

With the forehand grip you can see that the thumb is a little off the rubber and the three fingers are wrapped a little more around the handle. Flipping short underspin serves on the backhand side is relatively easy due to the open face of the paddle. Backhand flipping is a bit more treacherous for underspin serves due to the closed angle.

Picture 7: Neutral Grip

If you have long fingers like I do, you might find that the neutral grip will force your index finger to hang off the edge of the blade some. You can correct this uncomfortable feeling by shifting your index finger up a little bit so that it is not entirely parallel to the edge of the rubber. There are no natural weaknesses with a neutral grip, but then again there are no natural strengths other than a solid balance between forehand and backhand play.

Picture 8: Forehand Grip

The toiehand grip really covers up the handle and the index finger is more diagonal on the rubber. Blocking loops on the backhand side feels easier due to the naturally closed face during a rally when the tip is up. Relooping topspin on the forehand generally means more inside-out shots since the wrist is freer to tilt backwards, and not as free to tilt downwards, and so contact is more often on the inner side of the ball. If someone were to push deep to the backhand side chances are most backhand gripping players would rather push it back than backhand loop it.
Inside Coaching:
Technical Stroke Mechanics For Today’s Game
By John Allen, USATT National Coaching Chair & Certified National Coach

Table tennis has seen great evolution in recent years due to changes in equipment and how the sport is played. Thus in coaching it is important to keep up with the evolving changes in playing technique. The goal of this article is to present a few key elements characteristic of the game today.

World-class players of today are offensively & defensively adept on both forehand and backhand wings. The pace, speed and spin of the game today require fine technical skills that provide greater control of the racket, and acceleration when striking the ball. Control and variation that occurs at the contact point is earlier and earlier in the bounce. Controlling racket angles and contact point variation calls for wrist flexibility and fingertip pressure applied at the right moment.

The “Snap” or “Pop”

Once a player learns where to strike a ball to apply a stroke properly and basic mechanics are mastered, you can challenge your player to vary the speed and spin of stroke technique. A key element of advanced stroke technique for racket speed and spin is the “snap” or “pop” of a stroke action. The snap or pop action of a stroke can occur to apply force or racket speed into a ball and apply the movement to generate spin. The primary joints of this action in today’s mechanics are the elbow and wrist. The supplement movements of a stroke, preparation and follow-through, support body position, balance and desired placement.

“It’s all in the fingers”

Another characteristic for control of the racket critical for technique in today’s game is fingertip pressure. This pressure is applied from the tip of the index finger for forehand and the side of the last digit of the thumb for backhand, to initiate racket movements. A prime example of this is seen in Cheng Yinghua’s grip technique as he stands ready to receive serve.

The sensitivity of the fingertip allows for the finest motor control of the hand which is one with the racket. This sensitivity can control touch, racket angle, wrist and elbow “snap” or stabilization. The grip and finger pressure during racket preparation must be relaxed yet firm to provide flexibility, and strength. Control with the fingertips is critical to racket movement in serving. This can be illustrated by comparing racket movement, between using only the index finger and thumb, and then using just the latter three fingers of the hand to generate speed and spin with a serve motion.

Fingertip pressure initiates wrist action and timing of the stroke action. As a coach it is important to teach this element of technique to generate speed and spin from the wrist and lower arm movement. Observe and share examples of this mechanic with your students to illustrate its use by other players.

Have your students practice this technique by gripping the racket with just the index finger and thumb, keeping the other fingers off the grip, then shadow stroke with various stroke actions. Observe racket control and timing of the stroke actions to queue your players and reinforce this mechanic when appropriate.

Summation of Forces

Another biomechanical principle that has evolved with the advancements in equipment and technique is movement efficiency and summation of forces. The speed and spin properties of today’s rubber and gluing techniques have given rackets greater potential to play at a faster tempo or pace. Biomechanics in stroke techniques have developed to accommodate this equipment potential. We see examples of this in the use of backhand offense and topspin play of shakehand and penhold players, and with serve techniques producing spin variations with shorter stroke movement.

Summation of forces refers to generation of muscular force through progressive movements from larger, slower and more powerful muscle groups onto smaller, faster moving muscle groups, resulting in maximum force production. With today’s rubber and gluing techniques, force is often generated from the waist rather than the legs (see figure 1). The summation principle still applies, progressively generating force from the waist, shoulder, elbow, and wrist.

These stroke mechanic characteristics have raised the playing technique of table tennis today. It’s important to recognize and apply these elements into our coaching practice to meet the challenges of today’s game.

References for technique used for this article are from the following sources: 1) Hudetz, Radivoj, Table Tennis 2000: Technique with Vladimir Samsonov, 2000; 2) Killerspin-DVD, Success in Table Tennis, 2003; 3) Glenn Tepper-International Table Tennis Federation, Level 1 Coaching Manual, 2003.

Summary

Every grip can win, but the more extreme any particular grip you choose the more likely you will have extreme strengths and weaknesses that can and will be exploited by those that understand the game.

Picture 9: Backhand Grip

Long fingers now stay more on the surface of the paddle, however the other fingers are extremely loose on the handle. Watch out for heavy topspin serves from the backhand side with this grip. If you want to nullify it, try serving short heavy underspin to their forehand. Deep pushes to the forehand side are much smarter than doing the same on the backhand where this grip really shines. Playing balls to the middle or the transition point is another weak area of this grip as compared a forehand grip.
Basics Corner:  
The Backhand Loop

The backhand loop utilizes mainly forearm and wrist together with the hips-waist movement, since due to the neutral stance, minimal weight transfer occurs. Because of this, the backhand topspin is often less powerful than the forehand topspin, though notable exceptions exist, particularly where a backhand grip is used. Due to the neutral stance, the player should experiment with finding the correct distance in front of the body for contact. (Backhand loop demonstrated by Vladimir Samsonov, former World #1.)

Backhand Loop Against Backspin

Preparation
The leg position for a backhand topspin can vary from a neutral stance with feet parallel to the table to either leg slightly forward. Forehand attackers often prefer to be in a slightly forehand stance with the left foot forward. Starting position of the racket is generally between the legs, with the racket under knee height. The shoulders move to the left with the right shoulder lowered and forward, the wrist bent backwards and the racket closed.

Swing & Contact
The racket moves forwards and upwards as the knees straighten and the hips, waist and shoulders rotate to the right. Contact is in front of the body. The wrist accelerates through contact.

Follow-Through
The arm is fully stretched forward and racket closed, head high at the conclusion of the stroke.

Backhand Loop Against Topspin

Preparation
The leg position for backhand topspin can vary from a neutral stance with feet parallel to the table to either leg slightly forward. Forehand attackers often prefer to be in a slight forehand stance with the left leg forward. Starting position of the racket can also vary from between the legs to the outside of the left leg, depending on the player's preference, with the wrist bent back and the racket closed.

Swing & Contact
The racket moves forward and upward, making contact in a brushing action, though in a more horizontal arc than for against backspin. Contact is made in front of the body with the racket closed.

Follow-Through
The arm moves forward, finishing shoulder height with the racket in a closed position.
TIP OF THE MONTH: JANUARY
Stepping Around
By Carl Danner

Stepping around one’s backhand to hit a forehand is a standard and useful tactic. But there’s one side to it most players don’t realize.

When you step around, you make a tradeoff by giving your opponent more time in exchange for your chance to hit a more powerful shot. This occurs because forehands are hit to the side of the body, whereas backhands are hit in front – so it takes longer for the ball to get to your forehand. This difference is most apparent in topspin rallies where balls bounce out deep.

What’s it mean tactically? By stepping around, you also give your opponent the time she needs to step around. Similarly, when you see your opponent start to make this move, you can do the same with the extra time provided. Just knowing this creates new possibilities. For example, you might think twice about stepping around against an opponent whose forehand is stronger than yours, especially if you can hold your own in backhand rallies. Alternatively, an opponent’s forehand loop is weak can be exploited by encouraging him to step around and open into your own, stronger forehand.

Highland Open

HIGHLAND, IN • OCT. 22-23, 2005 • BY DAN SEEMILLER

The second annual Highland Open was a 3-star event with 145 players. The South Bend TTC was the host club and the tournament was sponsored by Lake County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Butterfly, and Highland Parks & Recreation.

The Highland field house easily held 30 tables and the lighting and barriered courts made for a first-class tournament. Prize money and trophies added up to $4500. Many thanks to our volunteer tournament committee: Mont Handley, Kevin Wool, Jason Denman, Phil & Kara Schmucker, Dan & Mary Cochran, Mark Nordby, Jim Willits, Barry & Stella Chan, Keith Jones and Val Seemiller. Also, many thanks to referee Pete Chamberlain and Umpires Kagan Lee and Joe Helfand, who did a fine job.

In Open Singles, Sasa Drinic had an easy time, winning all his matches 4-0, defeating Randy Seemiller in the semifinals and brother Dan in the final. Dan defeated Lukasz Fita in the other semi, 4-1. In Under 2550, Joe Cochran had two major upsets, defeating Randy Seemiller in his preliminary group and Fita in the semifinals to advance to the final, where he lost to Coach Dan Seemiller 3-1. Nathaniel Curran was the other surprise semifinalist.

In Under 2400 Randy Seemiller defeated Lukasz Fita 3-0 in the final, while in Under 2300 Joe Cochran defeated Chip Coulter to claim the title, 3-0. In Under 2125's, Nathaniel Curran won over rapidly improving Dan Seemiller Jr., 3-1. Dan Jr. went on to win the Under 2000 event 11-9 in the fifth over Olovable Ayangade. Coach Nordby’s student, Scott Dalton, won Under 1875, 11-9 in the fifth over veteran Dick Peregrine.

Edmund Mercier lost at the 2000 event 1-2 with being down 1-2 in games. C.J. Brewer, only 8 years old, was in three semifinals: Under 14 Boys, Under 1200 and Under 1350.

Many thanks to the participants who support our South Bend events. The St. Joseph Valley Open, a 3-star event, will be held at Indiana University at South Bend on May 6-7. Make plans to join us for a well-run, first-class tournament.

Open – Final: Sasa Drinic d. Dan Seemiller, 7-7,6; SF: Drinic d. Randy Seemiller, 6,5,4; D. Seemiller d. Lukasz Fita, 6-9,4,5; QF: Drinic d. A.J. Brewer, 7,8,3,3; R. Seemiller d. Mitch Seidenfeld, 4-3,13,3,1; Fita d. Jason Miller, 3,7-8,5,3; D. Seemiller d. Mark Nordby, 11-6,5,4,10;

Open Doubles: Sasa Drinic/Lukasz Fita d. Dan Seemiller/Randy Seemiller, 4-0.


Under 14 Boys – Final: A.J. Brewer d. Stephen Clyde, 3,0,2-3-4; C.J. Brewer & Merrill Huang.

Under 2550 – Final: Dan Seemiller d. Joe Cochran, 5,9-8-7; SF: Seemiller d. Nathaniel Curran, 5,6,4; Cochran d. Lukasz Fita, 6-5,10-7,8.

Under 2400 – Final: Randy Seemiller d. Lukasz Fita, 9,10,6; SF: Seemiller d. Mark Nordby, 8,4,5; Fita d. Mitch Seidenfeld, 7,6,9.

Under 2250 – Final: Joe Cochran d. Chip Coulter, 10,8,7, SF: Cochran d. A.J. Brewer, 10,6,10; Coulter d. Mitch Seidenfeld, 8,9-6-9.


Under 2000 – Final: Dan Seemiller Jr. d. Olovable Ayangade, 4-10,8-7-9, SF: Seemiller d. Pavel Chluchowski, 6,6-9-11, Ayangade d. Rafael Bardo, 14-7-7,9.

Under 1875: Scott Dalton d. V. Khodyryev, 9-9,8.


Under 1625: Ricky Lam d. Mike Crieffisi, 9,10,10.

Under 1500: Ricky Lam d. Jeff Schiffl, 7,7,5.

Under 1350: Doug Hageman d. Joe Mahler, 8,9,9.

Under 1200: Richard Haraldsson d. Ronald Li, 6,8,10.

Under 1000: Ben Sislav d. David Clyde, 3-9-11,9,6.


USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE • January/February 2006
Atlanta Giant RR
Atlanta, GA • Nov. 5, 2005
Open – Final: Didi De Souza d. Preston Chin, 5,3,5,-8,4; SF: De Souza d. John Mar, 6,8,6,7; Chin d. William Mobley, 10,8,7,4,10.
Class A – Final: Robert Bowlander d. Paul Singh, 6,8,7,6; SF: Bowlander d. Sue May Goh, 9,9,9,10; Singh d. Warren McNeil, 9,6,8,8,3.
Class B: Ilya Bushkanets d. Ray Filz, -9,-7,4,10,7,4,6,7.
Class C: Shawle Sung d. Kingsley Chin, 7,8,7,8.
Class D: Daniel Turner d. Ted Melton, -8,-8,2,8,9.
Handicap: Philip Garrett d. Jude Lam, 10.

$1000 Charlotte Open
Charlotte, NC • Sept. 25, 2005
Open: 1st Nigel Christopher; 2nd Didi DeSouza; 3rd Pablo Perez.
Open Consolation: 1st Norbert Her福特.; 2nd DJ Settle.
U2000 Class A: 1st Godwin Smith; 2nd DJ Settle.
U2000 Class B: 1st Ray Filz; 2nd Van Vu.
U2000 Class C: 1st John Pahl; 2nd Rick Thigpen.
U1000: 1st Moustapha Nasser; 2nd Elias Gomez Jr.

Austin Fall RR
Austin, TX • Nov. 5, 2005
Class A: 1st Tu Tran; 2nd Hoang Nguyen; 3rd Le Phuong Linh Tran.
Class B: 1st Li Feng Liu; 2nd Vishal Iyer.
Class C: 1st Jui-der Chu; 2nd Tu Tran Nguyen.
Class D: 1st Finaki Ghosh; 2nd Quan Haynh.
Class E: 1st Clifford Hsieh; 2nd Doug Wade.
Class F: 1st Kevin Rain; 2nd Colby Free.

Potomac Open
Potomac, MD • Nov. 19-20, 2005
Open Singles – Final: Han Xiao d. James Duan, 6,9,7,9,-7,6; SF: Xiao d. Nahruddin Asgarali, 5,9,5,9; Duan d. Peter Li, 6,9,8,6; QF: Xiao d. Gary Framin, 6,2,5; Asgarali d. Vladimir Poradich, 10,7,-8,11; Duan d. Vitaliy Deyak, 4,11,8; Li d. John Wetzler, 7,7,5.
U2300 – Final: Raghu Nadmichettu d. Vitaliy Deyak, 7,12,8,9; SF: Nadmichettu d. Nahruddin Asgarali, 5,7,7; Deyak d. James Duan, 6,-11,5,7,7.
U2150 – Final: Peter Li d. Khurram Aziz, 7,7,2,-7,3; SF: Li d. Gary Framin, 6,-4,5,8; Aziz d. Joseph Wang, 9,-10,8,7.
U2000 – Final: Steve Hochman d. Eric Dang, 9,8,-8,3; SF: Hochman d. Charlie Sun, 7,5,2; Dang d. Aziz, 7,6.
U1900: Julian Waters d. Frank Riddick, 8,7,6,7.
U1700: Vanlal Rema d. Hyoung Kom Kim, 6,-9,10,8.
U1500: Daniel Kokotov d. Vanil Kaprov, 2,3,2,2.
U1200: Varfar Zemskova d. Valina Yen, 10,7,7.
U14200 Doubles: Nahruddin Asgarali/Steve Hochman, Marcus Jackson/Barbara Wei, 6,10,10,8.
U36000 Doubles: 1st Paul Kovac/Samuel Huang; 2nd Ray Glass/Paul Nichols.

New Jersey September Open
Westfield, NJ • Sept. 17-18, 2005
Division A: 1st David Rosenzweig; 2nd Ajayi Ohohe; 3rd Larry Bably; 4th Christopher Teille.
Division B: 1st Mark Berg; 2nd Oleg Trofimov; 3rd Vipan Ahuja; 4th Jack Lam.
Division C: 1st Victor Wabby; 2nd Farhad Jafari; 3rd Jared Derweiler; 4th Behzad Fazel-Sarjui.
Division D: 1st Nivaldo Martinez; 2nd Jonathan Awad; 3rd Andy Owens; 4th Todd Friend.

Under 2300 Open RR
Chicago, IL • Nov. 12, 2005
Group One: 1st Joe Cochrann, 8,0; 2nd Minh Lam, 7,1; 3rd A.J. Brewer, 5,3; 4th Jason Miller, 5,4.
Group Two: 1st Tunwa Yee, 8,0; 2nd Ed Hodghead, 6,2.
Group Three: 1st Wayne Luon, 6,2; 2nd Bobby Douglass, 5,3.
Group Four: 1st Inigo Zasper, 8,0; 2nd Jeff Schiff, 6,2.

September Davison Open
Davison, MI • Sept. 24, 2005
Open: 1st Avant Amin; 2nd Dave Peradotto; 3rd Simon Toth.
U2250: 1st Avant Amin; 2nd Mark Merritt; 3rd Jim Barton.
U2100: 1st Avant Amin; 2nd Joel Lubick.
U1650: 1st Dave French; 2nd Charles Sherman.
U1550: 1st Dave French; 2nd Charles Sherman.
U1450: 1st Dave French; 2nd William Casey.
U1350: 1st Daniel McFarland; 2nd Paul Dobrowolski.
U3600 Doubles: 1st Charles Sherman/Steve King; 2nd Phil Weatherly/Mike Casey.

October Davison Open
Davison, MI • Oct. 29, 2005
Open: 1st Scott Endicott; 2nd Avant Amin; 3rd Bence Toth.
U2250: 1st Scott Endicott; 2nd Avant Amin; 3rd Mark Merritt.
U2100: 1st Bikramjeet Singh; 2nd Shu Xue; 3rd Jim Barton.
U1950: 1st Bikramjeet Singh; 2nd Jim Barton.
U1750: 1st Jonathan Serman; 2nd David Peck.
U1650: 1st Keith Pech; 2nd Charles Sherman.
U1450: 1st Joseph Helfand; 2nd Keith Pech.
U1350: 1st Daniel McFarland; 2nd Adam Roster.
U1200: 1st Seth Pech; 2nd Mel Rodriguez.
U3600 Doubles: 1st Jim Keep/Danny Dulkin; 2nd Kevin Spencer/Sam Darling.

Power Pong Open
Fountain Valley, CA • Oct. 22, 2005
Open: 1st Tach Tran; 2nd Jun Valencia.
Junior Open: 1st Willie Castillo Jr.; 2nd Sang Lien.
Juniors: U1000: 1st Ethan Chua; 2nd Erica Wu.
Under 10: 1st Erica Wu; 2nd Ethan Chua.
Over 40/U1650: 1st M. Ventura; 2nd Tony Lai Yu.
U2300: 1st Trung Nguyen; 2nd Tu Tran.
U2150: 1st Trung Nguyen; 2nd John Schneider.
U1800: 1st H. Tahmassian; 2nd Thanh Tran.
U1700: 1st Patrick Yuan; 2nd M. Ventura.
U1550: 1st Richard Olson; 2nd David Flores.
U1350: 1st Ken To; 2nd T. Paul Nguyen.
U1200: 1st Erica Wu; 2nd Tina Zhao.
Novice: 1st Patrick Chao; 2nd Fedor Kossakovsk.
U3700 Doubles: 1st Le/Nguyen; 2nd Nguyen/Phan.

USA Tournament Results

Phoenix Open
Phoenix, AZ • Oct. 8-9, 2005 • By Wayne Johnson
Open Singles-Runner up Panno Dok and Champion Gia Leu

Gia Leu was determined not to be stopped! He went the entire weekend without losing a match on his way to his first Open Singles title. In the semifinals Gia came back from being down 0-2 to win the match in seven. Then in the final Gia was down 1-3 to Panno and won the last three games. Gia and his partner Jerry Whelpley breezed through the Under 3600 doubles losing only two games during the event. Congratulations to Gia for his fine effort this weekend!
Butterfly MDTTC
October Open
Gaithersburg, MD • Oct 15-16, 2005
By Wei Xiao

The Open event this month proceeded with fewer surprises than usual. The top six seeds advanced to the quarterfinals as expected. Amarest Sahu (2008) squeaked by Tom Orlik (2091) 3-2, while the steady blocking of Lixin Lang (2150) proved to be just a little too much for Khurram Aziz (2040), 3-2. In the semifinals, Amarest played three close games against top seed Han Xiao (2565) before losing the next two games each at 6 and the match 4-1. Amarest seemed to have difficulty returning serve in this match. In the other semifinal, Raghu Nadmichettu (2225) simply overpowered Lixin, winning 4-1 in convincing fashion. In the final, Han Xiao jumped out to a quick 2-0 game on Nadmichettu. Raghu was able to fight back and take a 10-8 lead, but Xiao equalized on an edge ball at 10-9 and won the deuce game, 13-11. He would then win the match four straight by taking the last game 11-8.

In other events, Thong Van Bui (1746) pulled off a major upset by defeating Khurram Aziz in the quarterfinals of the Under 2200 event in three close games (9,8,9). Lixin went on to win the event over Joseph Wang, 9,6,11, who took a 1 ()-8 lead, but Xiao equalized on an edge ball at 10-9 and won the deuce game, 13-11. He would then win the match four straight by taking the last game 11-8.

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Eurosib Russian ITTF Pro Tour
St. Petersburg, RUS • Nov. 3-6, 2005
Men's Singles – Final: Vladimir Samsonov (BLR) d. Boros/Cornelia Valda (HRV), 2,4,9,8. Kim/Ki iii (KOR) d. Park Mi Young/YOOn Sun Ae (KOR), 12,3,6,9.
Women's Singles – Final: Cao Zlien (CHN) d. Park Mi Young/YOOn Sun Ae (KOR), 12,3,6,9.

LIEBHERR German ITTF Pro Tour
Magdeburg, GER • Nov. 9-13, 2005
Men's Singles – Final: Timo Boil (GER) d. Jean-Michel Saive (BEL), 8,-7,10,6,11; SF: Boll d. Hao Shuai (CHN), 6,7,5,9; Saive d. Liu Guozlieng (CHN), -5.4,9,3.11. QF: Boil d. Jun Hye Kyung (KOR), 7,-5,-7.10,8.7. Gao Jun d. Jun Hye Kyung (KOR), 7,-813.6,8.

LIEBHERR Swedish ITTF Pro Tour
Gothenburg, SWE • Nov. 17-20, 2005
Men's Doubles – Final: Oh Sang Eun/Lee Jung Woo (KOR) d. Lucjan Blaszczyk/Wang Zeng Yi (TPE), -7,5,-6,9,-5,4,5. Liu d. Chen Weixing (AUT), 4-8,6-3,9-4; Saive d. Trinko Keen (NED), -9,-5,10,-1,8,7.

Sacramento Open
Sacramento, CA • Oct. 29, 2005
Open: 1st Shashin Shodhan; 2nd Barney J. Reed
U1800: 1st P. Zajac; 2nd D. Samuelson.
U2000 B: 1st W. Baird; 2nd Y. Kretov.
U2000 C: 1st A. Hising; 2nd S. Bezzivonnik.
U1800 A: 1st D. Rachmadic; 2nd S. Bhartia.
U2000 B: 1st S. Ikunjo; 2nd V. Sharg.
U2000 C: 1st Y. Boyko; 2nd S. Banh.
U1800 B: 1st V. Banth; 2nd S. Bhartia.
U1800 C: 1st E. Christensen; 2nd P. Chung.
U1600: 1st S. Banti; 2nd S. Bhartia.
U1400 A: 1st T. Nguyen; 2nd M. Gaynor.
U1400 B: 1st M. Low; 2nd K. Sandberg.
U1200 A: 1st B. Cohen; 2nd D. Sheeter.
U1200 B: 1st Y. Kretov; 2nd N. Sun.
U1200 C: 1st D. Sheeter; 2nd E. Baxter.
U1000 A: 1st E. Eversole; 2nd M. Copeland.
U1000 B: 1st M. Low; 2nd V. Kretov.
U1000 B: 1st B. Eversole; 2nd D. Tang.
U1000 C: 1st J. Orbell; 2nd B. Pak.
U800: 1st N. Sun; 2nd C. DeMartini.
U600: 1st D. Tang; 2nd H. Sanders.
U400: 1st Justin So; 2nd Eric Jiang.

Runner-up Raghu Nadmichettu - smiling?

Champion Han Xiao - frowning?

Reeds advanced to the quarterfinals as Fewer surprises than usual, the top six
matches: 8ths: Gao Jun d. Moon Hyun Jung (KOR), 7,-813.6,8. Interesting early
matches: 16ths: Gao Jun d. Jun Hye Kyung (KOR), 7,-5,10,-1,8,7.

Women's Singles – Final: Cao Zlien (CHN) d. Tie Yana (HKG), 7,5,-6,8,7. SF: Cao d. Ding Ning (CHN), -7,7,-5,4,5,9; Tie d. Gao Jun (USA), 9,9,5,7; QF: Cao d. Lee Eun Hae (KOR), -9,5,8,-7,7. Ding d. Chang Chenchen (CHN), 5,10,6,8; Fan d. Li Xiaoxia (CHN), 5,-7,5,10,8,7; Gao Jun d. Jun Hye Kyung (KOR), 7,-8,13,6,8. Interesting early matches: 8ths: Gao Jun d. Moon Hjang Yung (KOR), -7,5,10,-1,8,7. 16ths: Gao Jun d. Renata Stribkova (CZE), 7,-6,12,9,-5,2.

Women's Doubles – Final: Tye Yana/Zhang Rui (HKG) d. Lin Ling/Song Ah Sini (HKG), 6,7,6,-9,8,-4; SF: Tie/Zhang d. Ai Fujinuma/Yuko Watanabe (JPN), 5,3,8,6; Lin/Song d. Chang Chenchen/Fan Ying (CHN), -3,11,8,8,6.
If you believe you should be on the Olympic Eligible list, contact Don Gheorghe at USATT, 719-666-5833, ed@usatt.org. You must be an Olympic Eligible USATT member and have played in the past year to be on the list.

TOP OLYMPIC ELIGIBLE MEN
1. IL 2768 Lupulesku, Ilia
2. NJ 2691 Zhuang, David
3. CA 2617 Nguyen, Khoa Dinh
4. CA 2677 Thang, Tung Sheng Jack
5. NJ 2576 Hugh, Adam
6. NJ 2576 Zhuang, David
7. TX 2567 Owens, Eric
8. IL 2768 Liu, Yang
9. NY 2526 Shao, Yu

TOP OLYMPIC ELIGIBLE WOMEN
1. WA 2783 Fan, Yi Yong
2. CA 2467 Huang, Yao Xi
3. CA 2466 Banh, Tewly
4. CA 2466 Cheng, Yinghua
5. CA 2607 Huat, Mark
6. NJ 2418 Yip, Lily
7. CA 2458 Kong, Xiaolin
8. CA 2488 Gabriel, Freddie
9. NY 2351 Peluchova, Renata
10. OR 2267 Ping, Whitney

TOP OLYMPIC ELIGIBLE MIXED DUO
1. CA 2467 Huang, Yao Xi
2. CA 2467 Cheng, Yinghua
3. CA 2466 Banh, Tewly
4. CA 2466 Cheng, Yinghua
5. CA 2458 Kong, Xiaolin
6. CA 2488 Gabriel, Freddie
7. CA 2466 Banh, Tewly
8. CA 2466 Cheng, Yinghua
9. CA 2466 Cheng, Yinghua
10. OR 2267 Ping, Whitney

Tournaments Processed
This list was compiled on 12/10/05 (ages are as of that date) and includes all tournaments received through 12/03/05. Due to space limitations, only current members who have played since 09/01/05 are included. This document may not be reproduced without written permission of USA Table Tennis. Copyright 2006.

New Tournaments Included in Ratings
- Valley of the Sun Open
  - N. American Teams
  - Syracuse TTC 2005
  - Championships
  - Brooklyn November Open
  - Potomac Open
  - November Open
  - Schaumburg Fall Open
  - Northern KY Fall Open
  - DFW Winter RR
- Sunburst Tour 2005 #6
- Cary Open
- Framingham November Open
- Aurora Fall Open Tour
- Columbia Fall Open
- Cary Open Giant RR Jamboree #9
- Maryland Giant RR
- Highland Open
- Lafayette Open
- Power Pong October Open
- TX Wesleyan Univ. Fall Open
- Brooklyn October Open
- MATTGC October Open
- Western Open
- Tri-Cities Fall Open Dbl. RR
- Butterfly MDTTC Open
- Cincinnati Fall 2005 Giant RR
- Asheville Fall Open 2005
- Porky’s Fall Classic Open

If you believe you should be on the Olympic Eligible list, contact Don Gheorghe at USATT, 719-666-5833, ed@usatt.org. You must be an Olympic Eligible USATT member and have played in the past year to be on the list.

TOP OLYMPIC ELIGIBLE MEN
1. MD 2601 Gao, Jun
2. CA 2467 Huang, Yao Xi
3. CA 2466 Banh, Tewly
4. MI 2463 Reed, Jasna
5. NJ 2418 Hugh, Judy
6. NJ 2418 Yip, Lily
7. CA 2358 Lee, Jacqueline
8. CO 2310 Li, Nam
9. VA 2299 Yang, Virginia Wei-Ni
10. OR 2267 Ping, Whitney

TOP OLYMPIC ELIGIBLE WOMEN
1. CA 2467 Huang, Yao Xi
2. CA 2466 Banh, Tewly
3. CA 2466 Cheng, Yinghua
4. CA 2458 Kong, Xiaolin
5. CA 2458 Kong, Xiaolin
6. CA 2488 Gabriel, Freddie
7. CA 2466 Banh, Tewly
8. CA 2466 Cheng, Yinghua
9. CA 2466 Banh, Tewly
10. OR 2267 Ping, Whitney

Ratings Questions?
You can now search for all your results online at www.usatt.org. Should you have any ratings-related questions, contact Felisa Huggins, USATT Headquarters, One Olympic Plaza, Colorado Springs, CO 80909. To find out your rating if you cannot access our website, send a self-addressed, stamped postcard with your name and the date of your last tournament. You may also contact us at 719-866-4853 or by e-mail at ratings@usatt.org.
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USA Table Tennis Tournament Schedule

January 1-3 - MDTTC Butterfly Winter Open, Gaithersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne M. Kronlage, 410-489-7291. 0 Star

January 8 - Winter Broward 4-Star Open. Westfield, NJ. Contact: Carlos Zeller, 954-849-5436. czle939656@aol.com. ★★

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

January 8 - Winter Broward Open, Davie, FL. Contact: Raymond Spann, 863-277-8115. rayspann@velizon.net. ★

January 14 - Anchorage Open TT & AWG Tryouts, Anchorage, AK. Contact: Karl Augestad, 907-277-8115. eatha@swbell.net. 0 Star

January 14 - Anchorage Open TT & AWG Tryouts, Anchorage, AK. Contact: Karl Augestad, 907-277-8115. eatha@swbell.net. 0 Star

January 15 - Baystate Giant RR, Springfield, MA. Contact: David Chernoch, 413-567-8061. Chernoch@aol.com. 0 Star

January 21 - Maryland Circuit, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne M. Kronlage, 410-489-7291. 0 Star


February 1-2 - NJTTC April Open, New York, NY. Contact: Mike Babuin, 919-462-7878. malsabek@cox.net. ★★★

February 1-2 - MDTTC Butterfly Winter Open, Gaithersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne M. Kronlage, 410-489-7291. 0 Star

February 4-5 - Maryland Circuit, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne M. Kronlage, 410-489-7291. 0 Star

February 11-12 - NJTTC February Teams, Westfield, NJ. Contact: Larry Bavly, 908-654-9009. ★★

February 11-12 - MDTTC Butterfly Winter Open, Gaithersburg, MD. Contact: Wei Xiao, 301-916-4862. weixiao42@hotmail.com. ★

February 18-19 - 2006 Western Open, Berkeley, CA. Contact: North American Table Tennis, 703-738-8250. info@natabletennis.com.

February 19-20 - FL Colossal RR/FL Cup Team Championship, Lakeland, FL. Contact: Raymond Spann, 863-965-0760. rayspann@verizon.net. ★

February 25 - Maryland Circuit, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne M. Kronlage, 410-489-7291. 0 Star

March 4 - Missouri Winter Games Open, Springfield, MO. Contact: William Lewis, 417-890-8092. epcoptmagic@aol.com. ★★★

March 4 - 2006 Mississippi Open, Hattiesburg, MS. Contact: Narasimhan Tiger Ramakrishnan, 601-307-7614. herbbenn@aol.com. ★

March 11-12 - NJTTC March RR, Westfield, NJ. Contact: Larry Bavly, 732-828-3511. tournament@njttc.org. ★★★

March 17-19 - 2006 ‘Cary Cup’ Championship, Cary, NC. Contact: Mike Babuin, 919-462-3931. mike.babuin@townofcary.org. ★★★


March 25 - 2006 Alaska Open TT Championships, Anchorage, AK. Contact: Karl Augestad, 907-277-8115. activid@alaska.net. ★

March 25 - Maryland Circuit, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne M. Kronlage, 410-489-7291. 0 Star

March 26 - Brooklyn TTC Open, Brooklyn, NY. Contact: Brooklyn TT School/Club, 718-421-2200. esuen1972@yahoo.com. ★

April 1-2 - NJ State Championships, Westfield, NJ. Contact: Larry Bavly, 908-654-9009. tournament@njttc.org. ★

April 8-9 Maryland Circuit, Eldersburg, MD. Yvonne M. Kronlage, 410-489-7291. 0 Star


April 15-16 - 2006 SoCal Open, San Diego, CA. Contact: North American Table Tennis, 703-738-8250. info@natabletennis.com.

April 22 - Maryland Giant RR, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne M. Kronlage, 410-489-7291. 0 Star

April 28-29 - AITTA League Singles, Sherwood, AR. Contact: Eugene A. Atha, 501-835-5291. eatha@swbell.net. 0 Star

April 30 - Brooklyn TTC Open, Brooklyn, NY. Contact: Brooklyn TT School/Club, 718-421-2200. esuen1972@yahoo.com. 1 Star

USA Table Tennis Magazine • January/February 2006
The Viducich Stiga Pacific Rim Table Tennis Tournament was held in Portland for the 17th year on Nov. 5-6. Almost 200 players from as far west as British Columbia, Alaska and Hawaii took part in 26 events ranging from Under 300, Under 12 and Under 2400 Doubles, to Under 2500, Over 50 and Under 4000 Doubles, and right up to the Open event.

This Pac Rim took place through a huge collaboration of volunteers, with Tournament Director Jim Scott putting it together. Special thanks go to Paul Simon, Athletic Director of Madison High School, who made his excellent facility available and tended it from start to finish. Bob Viducich continues as our generous patron, providing part of the prize money and first-time USATT memberships for juniors on the way to his life-time goal of sponsoring 500 of them. Escalade Sports, through Patrick Griffin, has furnished Stiga tables which, after the tournament, are placed in schools like Madison that support a table tennis program or club. Judy Hoarfrost and Mike Bochenksi of Paddle Palace have helped out even more than in previous years. Bill Mason refereed while Bruce Bayley delivered tables and reported the match results, and their respective wives Margaret and Judy acted as hosts. Scott and Austin Preiss arrived a couple days beforehand and did exhibitions at schools and institutions. Other members and friends of Portland Table Tennis Club – too many to name them all here – helped in other ways; for example, new USATT Umpire 12-year-old Mary Dang, of Gregory Heights Middle School.

Men’s Singles Open featured the most closely fought and spectacular match of the tournament, with 2004 Pac Rim defending champion Barney J. Reed and Michael Hyatt going the full seven games in the semifinals. All these games ended with at most a three-point spread. Barney took the first two at 8 and 9. Then Michael became more aggressive and powerful, and won game three at 8 with counterlooping rallies off the table. He took game four also at 8, with more variation in tempo and placement, attacking even serves and loop-killing at the first opportunity. Barney won the next 11-8 and took a 3-2 game lead as Michael often lobbed and both make errors. In game six, Michael took a 7-3 lead, then Barney turned on his attack: 7-5. Michael next led 10-5. He missed a big loop-kill and then another, and soon it was 10-8. He called a time-out, but it didn’t help. Barney got a match point at 11-10 (that’s six in a row); then it’s 11-11 after a short countering rally. Barney missed two points on a flip and return of a soft flip, and it’s 14-12 Michael.

Game seven opened with cagy countering and Michael off the table. It’s 5-2 for Barney when they change ends. Michael won two by lobbing, 5-4. With Barney leading 6-5, the spectators gasp in wonder at the most sensational point of the tournament: Michael made a great backhand counter from far back only to have it smashed off the bounce wide to his forehand. On the ropes, he reached wide and below the table, counter-smashed down the line, then fell forward onto the floor; 6-6! Michael got his first lead at 7-6, but fell back 8-9 on two failed loops. Then Michael finally looped to Barney’s strong forehand; Barney almost retrieved it: 9-9. Michael then led 10-9 as Barney went long on a surprise spinny slow-loop. Michael won match point as his loop nicked the back edge.

In the Final, Fan Yi Yong stopped Michael’s advance, 3, 6, 3, 8, winning almost $2000 and the Pac Rim Championship again. In game one, Fan unleashed his ferocious backhand loop. Game two was Michael’s best, where he blew several winners. In the other semifinal, Danny Ho of Canada also lost 0-4 to Fan.

Women’s Singles had talent and fine matches. Top Oregonians Whitney Ping and Simone Yang had an early quarterfinal match, with Simone taking control with her medium pips after dropping the first game to Whitney’s loops, 8, 8, 8, 4. In the semis, Tawny Banh faced a spirited Simone, winning, then losing, at 8. Tawny needed her powerful loops to win, or Simone would gain the edge in hardcountering rallies. Tawny won the third 11-9 on a hard-fought game point as she finally managed to step around and hit hard to Simone’s backhand. The final game is 11-5, Tawny.

In the other Women’s semifinal, defending Pac Rim champion Biba Golic met USA’s fifth-ranked woman, penholder Yao Xi (Crystal) Huang. Crystal, then Biba, won 11-8. Biba’s spinny loops to the backhand caused errors in blocking in the second and third games. Behind 11-12 in game three, Crystal smashed wide to the forehand; Biba made a fine save, which her opponent hits long: 13-11. Down 10-11 in game four, Biba served a fastball ace. With several increasingly spinny loops Biba took the lead, and she wins the game and match, 13-11, with a hit off the bounce.

The Women’s Singles Final between Tawny and Biba went four close games. Tawny came back to win 11-9. Then Biba won 11-8 with good countering against Tawny’s backhand pips. The third game is neck-and-neck to 9-all. Then Tawny looped a winner at Biba’s playing arm. Then it’s 11-9 as Tawny hit a solid backhand, and then stepped around for a powerful forehand loop. In the fourth, down 4-6, Biba took an 8-6 lead with aggressive, spinny loops. Then 8-8, deuce, then 11-10 Biba, then 12-11 Tawny as Biba missed two backhand loops. Finally Tawny smashed a high loop for the match winner, 13-11. Tawny also beat Biba 3-0 in the Under 2500 semis, where she would lose to Michael in the final.

The final of Open Doubles was lively and surprising, with Fan Yi Yong and Quan Gu versus Barney J. Reed and Michael Hyatt. The first
team won games at 9 and 6, then the second team won at 3 with some powerful looping. Barney and Michael won the sometimes-spectacular fourth game at 19-17. In the fifth, they were down 0-3, but changed ends ahead 5-3 and held the lead for an 11-7 win—a fine comeback.

The Final of Mixed Doubles pitted Fan and Tawny against Barney and Biba. Fan/ Tawny won game one, 11-9, despite a late comeback by Barney/Biba. Fan and Tawny took the second game 11-8. Down 7-10 match point in the third, Barney scored on three fast forehand flips for deuce, but Fan and Tawny prevailed, 13-11.

Men’s Singles – Final: Fan Yi Yong d. Michael Hyatt, 3, 6, 3, 8. SF: Fan d. Danny Ho, 4, 1, 5, 2; Hyatt d. Barney J. Reed, -8, -9, 8, -8, 12, 9; QF: Fan d. Thor Truelson, 4, 3, 5, 7; Hyatt d. Alvin Ng, 8, 8, -8, 8, 8; Ho d. Guang Chi Zhang, 4, 7, -8, 7; Reed d. Sakda Timisuwan, 10, 7, 4, 10.

Women’s Singles – Final: Tawny Banh d. Biba Golic, 9, -8, 9, 5. SF: Banh d. Simone Yang, 9, -8, 9, 5; SF: Hyatt d. Alvin Hyatt, -8, -9, 8, 8, -8, 12, 9. QF: Men’s Singles – Final: Fan Yi Yong d. Michael Hyatt, 8, 8, 11, 1 L

Open Doubles – Final: Michael Hyatt/Barney J. Reed d. Fan Yi Yong/Quan Gu, -9, -6, 3, 17, 7. SF: Fan d. Thor Truelson, 4, 3, 5, 7; Hyatt d. Alvin Ng, 8, 8, -8, 8, 8; Ho d. Guang Chi Zhang, 4, 7, -8, 7; Reed d. Sakda Timisuwan, 10, 7, 4, 10.

Women’s Singles – Final: Tawny Banh d. Biba Golic, 9, -8, 9, 5. SF: Banh d. Simone Yang, 8, -8, 9, 5; Golic d. Yao Xi (Crystal) Huang, -8, 8, 11, 11.

Open Doubles – Final: Michael Hyatt/Barney J. Reed d. Fan Yi Yong/Quan Gu, -9, -6, 17, 7; SF: Hyatt/Reed d. Thor Truelson/Sakda Timisuwan, 8, 12, 8; Fan/Gu d. Tawny Banh/Yao Xi (Crystal) Huang, -4, 6, 9, 7.

Mixed Doubles – Final: Tawny Banh/Fan Yi Yong d. Biba Golic/Barney J. Reed, -8, 8, 11; SF: Banh/Fan d. Whitney Ping/Michael Hyatt, -9, -6, 17, 7; Golic/Reed d. Yao Xi (Crystal) Huang/Avishy Schmidt, -6, 8, 6, 9.

U2500 – Final: Michael Hyatt d. Tawny Banh, 8, 3, 7; SF: Hyatt d. Yao Xi (Crystal) Huang, 7, 11, 11; Banh d. Biba Golic, 2, 5, 4.


U2100 – Final: Tim Pang d. Rick Livemore, 3, 7, 8; SF: Pang d. Man Yan, 9, 8, 3; Livemore d. Guang Chi Zhang, 7, 9, 9.

U1900: Mark Gorce d. Valleri Kim, 9, 9, 2.

U1700: Weidu Qian d. Nikita Shamburger, 8, 9, 7, 15, 9.

U1550: Xi Xiang Xu d. Dave Krauss, 7, 9, 9.


U1250: Peggy Hsieng d. Kenny Law, -9, 10, 9, 8, 7.

U1100: Paula Hsieng d. Mark Blinder, -8, 11, 7, 8, 10.

U900: Alex Cheung d. Brian Chia, 8, 9, 6.

U700: Darrell Potter d. Donna Wilder, 14, 10, 11.

U500: Jim Coon d. Mary Dang, 5, -9, 7, 5.

U300: Daniel Winn d. Sam Reed, 2, 6, -5, -7, 9.

Over 40: Andy Zhang (Atlanta).

Over 30: Carlos Chiu (TWU).


Over 20: Lindsay-van der Puije (TWU).

Over 19: Lindsey Lloyd (Allen, TX).

Over 15: Brenda Paez (Austin).

Over 10: Lindsey Lloyd (Allen, TX).

Under 19: Tony Liu d. Alvin Ng, 8, 8, 8, 8.

Under 18: Dan Tung d. Austin Preiss, 3, 9, 7, 7.

Under 17: Da Tang d. Austin Preiss, 7, 8, 8, 4, 6.

College: Alvin Li d. Tina Chen, -2, 9, 9.

U4000 Doubles: Sam Lin/Mark Gorce d. Alvin Li/Wai Shing Wong, 9, 9, 8, 10.


Champion Eric Owens serves to Ludovic Gombos in the final.

Out of a fantastic field of sixty-six players from four states, Texas Wesleyan University Rams Eric Owens, Ludovic Gombos, and Carlos Chiu placed first, second and fourth in the Championship Class at the 2nd Annual Texas Wesleyan University Fall Open in the Sid Richardson Gymnasium. The 20 semifinal matches yielded round robins proved quite rigorous, as many competitors were visibly exhausted after playing their minimum six matches.

In an exciting final, Owens defeated new teammate Gombos at 7, -9, 9, 4, 10. For third and fourth place, Tuan-Anh Tran of Austin, Texas recorded a win over freshman Carlos Chiu by default. Chiu was unable to play his match due to leg cramps.

The possible source of Chiu’s exhaustion may have been his highlighted match of the tournament. In his opening round robin, Chiu squeezed out the victory over teammate Dinko Kranjac, 4, -9, 10, -32 (!), -10, 8, 12.

According to new Texas Wesleyan player Lifeng Liu, Eric Owens was much more tedious, as he pulled out the victory, -6, 7, 9, -9, 6, 5, 4. That duel consisted of 123 points over seven games.

Along with Tuan-Anh Tran, the Austin Table Tennis Club made an impressive showing at the Fall Open, placing second, third and fourth in Class A, and fourth in Class C. Dallas Fort Worth Table Tennis Association members won titles in Class C, D and E, and the Ben Hill Sporting Club from Atlanta, GA drove home with first, second and fourth place finishes as well.

The Atlanta group participated in team matches against Texas Wesleyan University the Saturday before the round robin. The Rams varsity team prevailed 9-1, while the Rams junior varsity won 8-2.

Texas Wesleyan University looks forward to hosting the Clear Channel NCTTA National Collegiate Table Tennis Championships, Apr. 8-10, 2006. The tournament is expected to host nearly 70 individual participants for the ACUI singles and doubles titles and nearly 40 teams for the NCTTA men’s and women’s team titles.

Championship: 1st Eric Owens (TWU), 2nd Ludovic Gombos (TWU), 3rd Tuan-Anh Tran (Austin); 4th Carlos Chiu (TWU).

Class A: 1st Abdul Rahman Khan (TWU); 2nd Lifeng Liu (Austin).

Class B: 1st Petro Stiriba (Atlanta); 2nd Lindsey Lloyd (Allen, TX).

Class C: 1st Larry Sangren (Dallas); 2nd Hai Tran (Dallas).

Class D: 1st Roger Quintana (Dallas); 2nd Andy Zhang (Atlanta).

Class E: 1st Alan Chen (Dallas); 2nd Peter Lindsay-van der Puije (TWU).
San Diego Open on the Stiga North American Tour

Balboa Park Activity Center • San Diego, CA • Nov. 5-6, 2005 • By Alan Williams

This was the season finale, the eighth and concluding tournament on the 2005 STIGA North American Tour, and if we had engineered it we couldn’t have had a more exciting and satisfying conclusion! One hundred and eighty USATT members took advantage of a gorgeous weekend in this beautiful setting, one of the few dedicated table tennis facilities in America.

Play was consistently on schedule, and play was also frequently spectacular. There were several stellar performances that need to be noted, and the foremost has to be that of Jeff Huang, the quick-improving 14 year old. Jeff was a real workhorse, entering multiple events and advancing deep into the Single Elimination Rounds of all of them. This left-hander racked up an amazing record in his two days of play and has established himself as a leading contender for National honors in his generation.

When the results were all in, Jeff had triumphed in three of the Ying-Lo junior competitions, winning the Boys Under 16 and Under 18, twice defeating Don James Alto, in six games and four games, respectively, and taking a spectacular seven-game match from Carlos Chiu in the Under 22! Trailing three games to two against the Texas Wesleyan player, Jeff took both game six and game seven by scores of 11-9 to bring a deafening roar of approval from the fans. In addition to his Junior victories, Jeff earned second in the highly competitive Under 2500 rating event, where only the skill of Ludovic Gombos kept him from an additional title. In the Open Singles Round Robin, Jeff beat Richard Lee and nearly pulled off a great upset of Xavier Therien, leading three games to one before the unflappable Canadian denied him the match. This, my friends, is quite a player. He was frequently able to control play with his backhand placement and has shown great improvement every time we’ve seen him in competition.

It’s always a pleasure to see Kazuhiro Kamada in play! This outstanding chopper posted a nifty seven-game win against Tuan Le in the Over 40 before losing to Loc Bao Ngo in the Final of that event. His full court coverage, athleticism and determination were on full display in this barn-burner. 10,10,9,-7,8. That left Praddy and John to figure out who was first, which took way too strong and three-balls Tran mei i lessly

This is a group with everything up in the air! Peter Zajac is stunned by the Qualifier, Dinko Kranjac, -5,6,1,1,9, who promptly drops to 1-1 when he loses a tough six-gamer to Gombos, 11,9,-6,8,-5,11.

Meanwhile, Zajac and Tung Phan are going at it hammer and tongs, with Phan pulling off the upset from down 3 games to 1! Peter drops to 0-2 as Phan wins, -9,9,-8,-9,7,3,9! Kranjac allows no such reversal, and vanquishes Phan, 4,6,8,5,9 to finish 2-1.

Zajac is playing for pride against Gombos, but Gombos is too strong and takes the top spot, 2,4,5,-12,-11,5. Kranjac becomes one of the few Qualifiers to reach the Quarterfinals with his fine performance.

Open Singles

Group 1: Peter-Paul, Tran, Roberts, Lim

Two players advanced from each Round Robin Group to Open Singles Quarterfinals. Top Seeded Pradeeban Peter-Paul had no trouble in going 2-0, dropping Courtney Roberts and Phillip Lim in straight games. Tran also went 2-0, besting Lim 2,3,7,5,3 and Courtney in a barn-burner, 10,10,9,7. That left Praddy and John to figure out who was first, which took seven games before the Canadian pulled it out, 6,12,-14,5,-8,9,6. Way to fight, John!

Group 2: Therien, Lee, Le, Huang

Xavier beat Richard Lee four straight and Tuan Le controls Jeff Huang 4-1. Things certainly get interesting when Jeff plays Xavier, however, taking a three games to one lead! Xavier is cool and poised and stays unbeaten, 7,-7,-8,-6,9.7,6 in a match that dished Huang’s fans hopes. When Tuan Le meets Xavier to determine the first and second seeds, it’s another roller coaster before Therien finds the two he needs to be, 7,-6,-5,4.-9,5,5.

Group 3: Owens, Chiu, Ngo, Mahat

No upsets at all in this group, with Eric Owens dropping not a single game! Carlos Chiu has to fend off Loc Bao Ngo, -6,10,4,7,5,6 to make the second spot, and Sandeep Mahat and Loc Bao Ngo decide not to play the now meaningless matches that remain.

Group 4: Gombos, Zajac, Phan, Kranjac

Gombos foreshadows his difficulties by dropping his first game to Tung Phan, but rights himself, -10,6,5,4,6.

Quarterfinals

Pradeeban Peter-Paul vs. Carlos Chiu

TWU has managed to place a team member in every slot of the Quarterfinals, but Carlos has got to be less than enthused about his draw, facing the Canadian Olympian. Carlos is a heckuva player, but Peter-Paul is a notch better, and his service game brings "oohs and ahs" from the spectators as Chiu attempts to deal with it. It’s all Praddy, 6,7,3,6.

Tuan Le vs. Ludovic Gombos

Tuan is another player I admire greatly, but Gombos seems determined to never give him an opening. Perhaps he is thinking about his escapes in last night’s Round Robin groups? Gombos moves to the Semis and Le has to make do with $145 as a Quarterfinalist, 3,7,0,5.

Eric Owens vs. John Tran

Could Tran conjure up the same sort of miracles he did yesterday? No! Eric is just too strong and three-balls Tran mercilessly 5,5,5,6 and Owens moves forward.

Dinko Kranjac vs. Xavier Therien

Dinko’s got skills, but if Xavier’s shown me anything this year, it’s been a consolidation of his stature as a 2500+ player! At the Lafayette Open, Therien had dispatched Dinko in straight games, and having two weeks to think about it doesn’t give Kranjac an edge. All four Quarters turn into straight gamers as Xavier wins 10,5,4,3.

Semifinals

Pradeeban Peter-Paul vs. Ludovic Gombos

Gombos is an often fiery competitor, sometimes distracted by off-court events. Then the adrenaline starts flowing! But I think we all have been in that position ourselves, so no one can really consider that unique. Besides, having to play Praddy? Not all that ego-reinforcing, if you know what I mean. Peter-Paul plays very strongly in this match, not at all bothered by the fact that Gombos is a lefty. While Ludovic digs deep and fights hard, it’s Praddy’s match, 5,11,4,9. $320 for Gombos and on to the final for the Canadian!
Eric Owens vs. Xavier Therien

In retrospect, Xavier might have been better served to fight to stay at the table rather than give ground. Eric loves to send his opponents first one way and then the other, widening the arc until he has room to send a slashing attack through unanswered. Xavier is playing excellent table tennis, but game (15-13) after game (11-9) after game (11-9) he's not able to break through to notch one of his own. Xavier, post-match, especially regrets that second game, when he held a substantial lead. “There's a big difference between trailing two nothing and being tied at one apiece!” he observes. Xavier scrapes game four from Eric, 11-5, but that's all there will be as Eric closes the door 11-3 in the fifth.

CHAMPIONSHIP MATCH
Pradeeban Peter-Paul vs. Eric Owens

In a quiet pre-match moment, Eric tells me that he'll be looking to pull Praddy wide to his forehand to open up his much softer backhand corner. In the actual event, it's nothing like that. Peter-Paul comes out as he likes to do, like a ball of fire, working fast, serving exceptionally and putting that nasty forehand into play. He smokes Eric in the first game, 11-3.

But Owens, with help from his corner, adapts quickly. Tactics are evolving, changing throughout this match. Now he begins to bring his loop not wide to the forehand, but to the middle, forcing softer returns and passive blocks. 7, 9, 6, Eric runs off three in a row and the crowd looks restless. Apparently all of the Open Singles matches here are going to be blowouts. But these are two great champions after all, so I know better than to count Praddy out. Now it seems he wants to go backhand to backhand with Eric, trying to pin him into his backhand corner. This is dangerous stuff, especially since Eric can step around for forehand winners or redirect...
his backhand down the line. But it puts Praddy back in the match, and Eric misfires just enough of these to pull Praddy back into the match. Rhythm and momentum are so important between closely matched opponents! It doesn’t hurt to catch a lucky break from time to time as well. Not once, but twice. lobbing from his backhand corner, Peter-Paul catches an “excuse-me” edge! 11-8, and it’s 3-2. Game six is more of the same, and Eric cleanly misses a forehand kill against a lob. 11-9 and the tenacious Canadian has tied the whole affair.

The crowd is buzzing now, and they are not to be disappointed. Both players have pulled out all the stops. Eric leads at the switch of ends, but has to come back to get to 9-all in the seventh, then 10-all. Naturally, it’s deuce in the seventh in the last STIGA North American Tour final of the year!

Praddy serves, and offers up a doozy, a short, heavily spun wicked number… which Owens fearlessly flips for a clean winner to the short, heavily spun wicked number...which Praddy smiles as he pockets the $800 Finalist reward. “Maybe so,” I respond, “but you won 1200 hearts with your fighting spirit!” Peter-Paul gives me an “oh-you-are-so-smarmy” look, but he and Xavier smile, knowing I am sincere in my admiration.

I also admire the NATT staff (Richard and Tom), Ref Linda Hsing, host SDTTA and the Balboa Park Activity Center, Reuben Kairy, emergency umpire Marco Borillo and each and every player who participated in the 2005 STIGA North American Tour. It’s for you folks that NATT and STIGA work so hard to present the best-managed series on the continent. See you next year!

**Open Singles – Final:** Eric Owens d. Pradeeban Peter-Paul, 3-7,9,6,-8,9,9; SF: Owens d. Xavier Therien, 13,9,9,-5,3; Peter-Paul d. Ludovic Gombos, 5,11,4,9; QF: Owens d. John Tran, 5,5,5,6; Peter-Paul d. Carlos Chiu, 6,7,3,6; Therien d. Dinio Kranjac, 10,5,4,3; Gombos d. Tuan Le, 5,7,0,5.


**Feingold Memorial Senior Events**

**Over 40:** 1st Loc Bao Ngo; 2nd Kazuhiro Kamada. **Over 50:** 1st David Sakai; 2nd Bill Ukapatayasakul. **Over 60:** 1st Bill Ukapatayasakul; 2nd Ragnar Fahlstrom.

**Ying/Lo Junior Competitions**

**Under 22 Men:** 1st Jeff Lin Huang; 2nd Carlos Chiu. **Under 18 Boys:** 1st Jeff Lin Huang; 2nd Dan James Alto. **Under 16 Boys:** 1st Jeff Lin Huang; 2nd Dan James Alto. **Under 13 Boys:** 1st Derrick Poon; 2nd John James Alto. **Under 10 Boys:** 1st Erick Shahnani; 2nd Ethan Chau. **Under 22 Women:** 1st Brina Vlassic; 2nd Alicia Wei. **Under 18 Girls:** 1st Tammy Gu; 2nd Alicia Sanchez. **Under 16 Girls:** 1st Alicia Wei; 2nd Sophia Salcido. **Under 13 Girls:** 1st Tammy Gu; 2nd Serena Banha.

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**Open – Final RR:** 1st Dan Seemiller Sr.; 4-0 (d. Dubina 4-0; d. R. Seemiller 4-0; d. Couther 4-0); 2nd Samson Dubina, 3-1 (d. R. Seemiller 4-1; d. Couther 4-0); 3rd Randy Seemiller, 1-2 (d. Couther 4-0); 4th Chip Coulter. **SF:** D. Seemiller Sr. d. Mike Walk, 4-0; Couther d. Mark Nordby, 4-1; Dubina d. Joe Cochran, 4-1; R. Seemiller d. Tak Cheong Yip, 4-0.

**Open Warmup: Group 1:** Dan Seemiller Sr. d. Amanda Dubina 3-0. **Group 2:** Samson Dubina d. A. J. Brewer 3-0. **Group 3:** Mark Nordby d. Chandra Krishnan 3-1. **Group 4:** Joe Cochran d. Dave Berenson 3-0. **Over 40:** 1st Dan Seemiller Sr., 3-0; 2nd Gary Martin, 2-1; 3rd Dave Berenson, 1-2; 4th Ken Roskos, 0-3. **Over 60:** Neil Myers d. Fumio Yoshikawa, 3-1.

**Under 17:** 1st A.J. Brewer, 2-0; 2nd Joe Cochran, 1-1; 3rd Dan Seemiller Jr., 0-2. **Under 14 – Final:** Jonathan Mast d. Jessica Mast, 3-1; SF: Jonathan Mast d. Ben Lovenheim, 3-0; Jessica Mast d. Casey MacClaren, 3-0. **U2400 – Final:** Samson Dubina d. Joe Cochran, 3-1; SF: Dubina d. A. J. Brewer, 3-0; Joe Cochran d. Randy Seemiller, 3-1. **U2200 – Final:** Tak Cheong Yip d. A. J. Brewer, 3-0; SF: Yip d. Phil Panno, 3-0; Brewer d. Chandra Krishnan, 3-1. **U2000 – Final:** Dan Seemiller Jr. d. Angelo Gambrelis, 3-1; SF: Seemiller d. Gary Martin, 3-1; Gambrelis d. Harry Hawk, 3-2.

**U1800:** Keith Pech d. Tom Burik, 3-1. **U1750:** Dave French d. Isaac Krrave, 3-2. **U1600:** Dave French d. Berl Stein, 3-2. **U1500:** David Powell d. Rich Baker, 3-2. **U1300:** Peter Yu d. Bob Sollish, 3-0. **U1100:** David Scott d. Marco Makkar, 3-0. **U900:** Seth Pech d. Chad Moore, 3-1. **U700:** Glen Strachan d. Ben Lovenheim, 3-1. **U5400** Doubles: Joe Grandalski/Jim Burik d. Jim Spetsios/Karl Ostermann, 3-1.

**U2800 Doubles:** Angelo Gambrelis/Ben Lovenheim d. Chris Mals/Tim Mals, 3-1.

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**Samson Dubina (R) eyes the ball coming from Chip Coulter (L).**

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**Millcreek Open**

**Eric, PA**

**By Sam Steiner**

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**USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE • January/February 2006**
Western Open on the Stiga North American Tour
FORD CENTER, STANFORD UNIVERSITY • PALO ALTO, CA • OCT. 15-16, 2005 • BY ALAN WILLIAMS

Open Champion
Stefan Feth

I am delighted to tell you that I am at a loss for words, or, more accurately, at a loss for the right word. Brotherhood, comradeship, camaraderie, these all begin to give a sense, but not the complete sense, of the atmosphere at this exciting and satisfying tournament. Part of the warm feeling, of course, comes from the quality of the people you work with, and with the work of Richard Lee and Wendy Troy, Tom Nguyen and Richard Mercado, Azmy Ibrahim and Michael Boot, Kenny Tien and Tom Miller, the tournament ran well.

It took a great deal of effort to pull off this particular love fest, in part due to the outstanding turnout. Three Hundred and Five USATT members opted to take the plunge for the Western, the largest turnout on this year’s STIGA tour. Keeping the tournament organized and on-time in Ford Center’s cozy confines of sometimes 24, sometimes 32 tables (using a separate room) took a bit of doing! What I want to convey, however, is not the successful operation by the staff, but the incredible sense of community that existed.

Kyna Fong and her Stanford clubmates were instrumental in securing the venue in the first place. They also came prepared to serve the participants with hot lunch delivery, which not only made the players happy but also gave the Stanford club a successful fundraiser. Northern California players showed an exceptional spirit, disputes were at an absolute minimum and everyone was seriously interested in everyone else’s results and well-being. Many people pitched in with assistance, Triscuit (aka Sean C. Lee) being the most joyful and light-hearted. Coaches, players, family members, visitors and dignitaries, they all exuded a sense of joy in the sport that was tonic to me and made the work of tournament operations much more bearable.

They also displayed a fine appreciation for the top-level play which permeated the upper levels of play here. Crowding the courts, they were respectful and knowledgeable about the games they were watching, simultaneously cheering local favorites while admiring the imports. Here, it seems, people have mastered the art of competing without becoming adversaries, of striving for personal bests without denigrating the opposition. We were treated to a pleasant stream of useful comments and suggestions, observations and compliments, as well as some great play by players new to us, most especially in the form of the Western Open’s Women’s Champ, Maki Tamaru. This lady showed she has the skills that more than justified her estimated 2300 rating. In Open Singles, she narrowly missed qualifying for the Second Stage RR, losing to the crafty veteran Loc Bao Ngo, 12,6,-6,-9. To earn the Women’s title, she defeated Jackie Lee, coming back from a 2-1 deficit, 7-10,7,6,5. Excellent play, Maki!

The Alto Brothers were also much in evidence, as Don James Alto won the Ying-Lo Junior competition for Boys U-16, and brother John James Alto double-dipped the Under 1400 and Boys’ Under 13 titles. John Leach found his way blocked not once, but twice, runner-up to Misha Kazantsev in both the Under 18 and Under 22 Juniors. Misha had an excellent tournament, winning those two events, plus the Under 2500 where he bested Yosmely Vadillo in the final. Vadillo, in his first STIGA Tour appearance, captured the Under 2375 over Samson Dubina. Tomas Fuentes Afflick nailed down the Under 1700 and came second to John James Alto in Boys’ Under 13. Brana Vlasic was unflappable and modest in her winning streak, as she captured three of the Ying-Lo Junior titles. Brana defeated Colleen Lee in both Girls’ Under 16 and Under 18, and then bested Aths Fong to add the Under 22 title as well.

The Sol Feingold Memorial Senior Events saw the venerable Peter Chen take the Over 50 title, defeating Kock Lee. Michael Greene bested Guang Kui-Dong in the Over 60, while the exuberant Yong Ren was the Over 40 champ, with a fine win over Tuan Le.

Saturday evening 16 players reached the Second Stage Round Robin of Open Singles where Sunday’s Quarterfinalists would be selected. These four round robin groups consisted of our Top 12 seeds and four qualifiers from the morning’s play. Loc Bao Ngo, Tuan Le, Nan Li and Kevin Au were the four who made it “the hard way” to this point.

**Group 1: Feth, Nguyen, Huang, Ngo**

Stefan Feth was obviously the odds on favorite to win the group, which he did, although young Jeff Huang scored a moral victory in scraping Feth for a game, 15-13. The youngster had his decisive match when he played second seed Anh Nguyen. What a tough competitor Anh is! Despite dropping the first game to Huang, Anh took second place with a 4-1 win. Huang and Loc Bao Ngo obviously didn’t feel there was anything meaningless in their match to settle third and fourth place, with Jeff coming back to avoid the upset, 8,9,-10,6,7,9. When Nguyen and Feth played to settle first and second place, Nguyen made a fine kill into Stefan’s wide forehand. The crowd roared their admiration when Feth, at nearly full extension, reached that ball in his backcourt and slapped it around the net post for a clean winner! Even more miraculous, it seemed to me, was that Feth had also regained his position and was ready for any return by the time the ball hit the table. This is one amazing player!

**Group 2: Gabriel, Zajac, Aponte, Le**

While the muscular Alex Aponte and Peter Zajac both defeated Tuan Le, Le had one of the major upsets of the tournament when he beat Freddie Gabriel 11-9 in the seventh game. That left Aponte and Le tied with records of 1-2, and since the head-to-head result went to Aponte, he would place
ahead of Le. So that meant that in the last match of the group, if Zajac beat Gabriel, Zajac would come in first at 3-0, while there would be a three-way tie for second between Gabriel, Le and Aponte. Instead, Gabriel defeated Zajac in another seven-game, creating a two-way tie between himself and Peter. Since Freddie won the head-to-head battle, he finished first in the group despite his upset loss and Zajac was second. Freddie never said a word to the control desk about an injury, but we later heard that he was playing with a thumb split wide open and glued back together. Now that's a competitor!

**Group 3: Reed, Lee, Schmidt, Li**

Barney J. Reed, extremely focused, defeated all three of his cohorts to finish first, very efficiently. Second place is a lot more confusing. First, Jackie Lee defeated Nan Li in seven games. Then Nan Li defeated Avishy Schmidt 8,8,3,10. Meanwhile, Jackie was called away to play her best of five games against Avishy. Avishy has 4 points (default win over Jackie, losses to Barney and Nan) and Jackie has only 3 points (beating Nan Li, losing to Barney and defaulting to Avishy) so it's not a three-way tie between players with 1-2 records, it's a two-way tie between Schmidt and Li, with Nan winning the head-to-head match and she is second. See, that wasn't so difficult, was it?

**Group 4: Ren, Kazantsev, Vadillo, Au**

The whole group begins with an upset as the left-handed Vadillo comes back from a 3-1 deficit to defeat the top-seeded Yong Ren, 3-8, 9-8, 4,4,5! This is a dangerous group, as it takes Misha Kazantsev six games to defeat the Qualifier, Kevin Au, 4,7,6,3,7,7! Count the points played, and it's Misha 51, Kevin Au 49. Kevin shows that he's a battler when he plays the top-seeded Yong Ren as well. It's straight games, but by scores of 10-7,10,6. Vadillo's sitting pretty with his upset of Ren, but can't duplicate the result with Kazantsev. Misha handles the lightning quick Vadillo in six, 8,7,9,12,3,5. With two matches to play, only Kazantsev is assured of making the Quarterfinals, so the competition stays intense! Vadillo does what he needs to do against the stubborn Kevin Au, 7,9,9,11,13,15,7! You have to hand it to Mr. Au; he fought his best in going 0-3 in the group. That leaves Vadillo at 2-1, so the best Yong Ren can do is create a three-way tie if he defeats Misha. This match is tied at 2 games, again at 3 games, and the pivotal game goes in Misha's pocket, making him a perfect 3-0 in the group, 9,9,3,10,8,9. Wow! Yong Ren actually outscores Misha 69 to 65 but cannot have the match or a trip to the Quarters. Kazantsev and Vadillo advance. One tough group!

**Semifinals**

**Misha Kazantsev vs. Stefan Feth**

Misha's an excellent player, and stylistically not so different from Stefan. Misha wants to bring that powerful forehand to bear, the big pinwheeling one. Feth may favor the backhand more frequently. The points played here figure to be spectacular, and they are! But Stefan holds too many advantages. His service game is too much for Kazantsev, especially early in the match, for one. He has that little extra in every aspect of the game. On one point, I see Stefan launch a loop return that breaks a serious three and half feet after the bounce, leaving Misha with a paddle full of air. Wow! There's no shame in losing to Stefan, and Misha, well, Misha's been a different player at this tournament than I have seen him be before. Dare I say...mature? I think with the poise and calmness he exuded this weekend, the skills I saw him display in his matches, and his one loss coming at the hands of an International player, that Misha Kazantsev is going to be a force at the 2005 USA Nationals. Feth advances 3,8,9,7 and Misha gets $320 as a semifinalist.

**Quarterfinals**

**Stefan Feth vs. Peter Zajac**

Peter's a heckuva player, but honestly he can't love this draw. He scores six points in the first two games against the NEWGY Rojo-Pong Champ before he gets a better feel for Stefan's serve. Still, it's a tall order to go after a world-class player in the Quarters. Feth advances in straight games, 4,2,9,7.

**Nan Li vs. Misha Kazantsev**

Nan Li comes out smoking! She nicks Misha for the first game, 11-6. But it seems to me that Misha has developed some patience, and in many of his matches at the Western Open was willing to explore his opponent before applying his new-found knowledge. From game two forward, there is little doubt. Misha applies the crusher in game three when he trailed 10-8 but rattled off four straight points for the win! Misha advances to the quarterfinals, 6,7,10,6,6,6.

**Barney J. Reed vs. Anh Nguyen**

Okay, I have to make a confession in fairness to you, the reader. I have become a Barney Reed fan. I root for Barney. I find theories and want to offer helpful advice to Barney. See, Barney comes to most of the NATT STIGA Tour events, and is invariably cheerful and helpful. But what a year he's had, losing in the Quarters of most Open Singles, being upset by Ben Johnson in Nashville and Tawny Bahn in San Diego... so please pardon the prejudice and simple-minded opinions I write now. I have developed the theory that Barney is too eager to adopt the playing style of his opponent, whether it is a conscious decision or not, I cannot tell. Against Tawny, he was willing to stand at the table and bang away with her, her game. Against Don Hamilton, he became a backcourt roller and fisher. Against Ben Johnson, he was trading powerwills. Will the real Barney Reed please step forward! Here he faces the persistent and pesky Anh Nguyen, who never quits and likes to angle you around from close to far. Barney wins the first game handily, 11-3, but I wonder if he can deal with the crowd, sometimes his focus wavers. The spectators are all tight to the barriers, even staring through the inside glass wall of the gym, four deep. It seems an issue because Barney falls behind 7-3 in game two before pulling it out, 11-8. Come on, stop fouling around. Anh takes game three, 11-3. Man. Now I see something I like, Barney has found a tactic that Nguyen has difficulty dealing with, slow, spinny backhand loops that strike the center line, just at the end line, forcing Nguyen to back up. These produce some feeble blocks and clean misses. Barney sweeps past Nguyen 3,8,3,9, and 7.

**Yosmely Vadillo vs. Freddie Gabriel**

Vadillo's a fighter, but Freddie's one talented player! He seems to have no problem with Vadillo being a lefty. Vadillo tries to crowd Freddie in tight to the backhand wing, but Freddie is stepping around...and looping down the line into Vadillo's forehand! What's he spotted? Whatever it is, it's a winning tactic, and Freddie takes the first two games at 4 and 7. But I keep saying, Vadillo's fighter. He certainly is! It's Freddie's court coverage that keeps him close in Game three...11 all...12 all...14 all! Freddie wins on his serve and calls Time Out. Trailing by one but serving, Vadillo has a minute to think about it. Four shots later, it's Freddie's game, 16-14! 11-8, Gabriel wins the fourth game, too. It's the closest four-game victory I've seen in a while! Yosmely and the other Quarterfinalists each get $145, and four players remain.

**Barney J. Reed vs. Freddie Gabriel**

Gabriel comes charging out, 5-1 in the first game and the rout is on. Or is it? Barney isn't slapping his thigh with his racket, screaming at the fates, he's...hey! He's focused! And what a great comeback he mounts to win 11-9 in game one. There's no posse here, no girlfriend, no parent... and Barney isn't interacting with the spectators, he's playing the match, focused like grim death! In game two it's a death dance, tied at 4, tied at 5, Barney leading 9-8, deuce. No one is giving any ground here. Freddie wins, 15-13. It's no different in game three, as they are tied at 4 apiece...this has got to be draining for both of them! Barney leads 10-9 and holds serve and makes an absolute beauty. It takes a high first bounce, Freddie reaches in to flip, but it's oh so much shorter than it looked like it would be! Freddie misses the flip completely and it's 2-1 for Reed. In game four, Freddie is plagued with service errors and poor service return. That throbbing thumb injury that we only learned about after the tournament, and not from Freddie, has to be a factor here. 11-6 and Barney leads 3-1. Barney really pours it on in game five, and Gabriel is eliminated, 11-4. This is the first time I've seen Mr. Gabriel in action, and I can tell you, I now understand the high praise you hear about him. No less an authority than Fan Yi Yong has stated that Freddie has the potential of being a World Class player. Here, he was a Western Open semifinalist. Not bad!
CHAMPIONSHIP MATCH: Stefan Feth vs. Barney J. Reed

Well let's see. Feth wants to start early because he has a plane, and Barney's match finished well after Feth's semi, and the schedule says 4PM and we aren't budging. So Stefan takes to the table and begins his warm-up with Girls' Under 13 Champion Ariel Hsing. Stefan is not only a great player, he has great PR skills as he hits with the future USA Women's Champion. When our two players hit the table, it's more than PR skills from Feth and he surges out in front 7-0. That's an awfully large hole, but Barney's not folding. Game one to Stefan, 11-6. Pride, and focused pride. Barney does a little schooling of his own to the German National Semifinalist and builds an 8-2 lead! No self-destruct today, thank you. Stefan completely switches tactics here, and it's all the short game now. It's a rhythm disrupter, it's an area of superiority for Feth, and Barney seems caught off guard by it, leaping in mid out for attacks that don't come. Barney's leading 9-8 when he gets a bad break, and Stefan's dump of a push hits the cord and springs straight up all of an inch, and straight down fora winner. Two missed backhand blocks later, it's 2-0 in Stefan's favor. Now they me back to ripping the ball in game three, and it's nip and tuck until Feth leads 6-5. Here, Feth takes a two-point advantage with a nifty short sidespin serve. When Barney misses a backhand hip off a short push, it's game three to Stefan, 11-6. In game four, Stefan takes a 2-0 lead on his serve, but Barney plays smart in gaining ground to 3-3. Barney rips a couple of winners, Feth answers with one of his own. Then Stefan misses a duck, just misses it long on a popped ball and Barney leads 7-5! But Feth, unhappy with that shot, is now gaining like mad for the wide corners. Barney's backhand loop doesn't tie him up like it tied up Anh Nguyen and it's 10-8 for Feth. Make that five straight points for Stefan, the title, and $2000 as he beats Reed 6,9,6,8! Well, I have been impressed. Barney was beaten by a better player, but he certainly didn't beat himself, and he gets $800 for that, his best finish this year, and the STIGA North American Tour. Stefan Feth? Well, he's just flat-out amazing! The tournament was a blast! The turnout was high, the operations were grueling, the play was first-rate, and I think we saw some breakthrough performances. All of it in the Northern California culture of cooperation, brotherhood and community. I think we gotta get a bigger hall. Because to top this one, we need a bigger tent!

Open Singles – Final: Stefan Feth d. Barney J. Reed, 6,9,6,8. SF: Feth d. Kazantsev, 3,8,7,9. Reed d. Gabriel, 9,-13,9,6,4. QF: Feth d. Peter Zajac, 4,2,9,7; Reed d. Anh Nguyen, 3, 8,-3,9,7; Kazantsev d. Nan Li, -6,7,10,6,-6,6; Gabriel d. Yosmely Vadillo, 4,7,14,8.

Women: 1st Maki Tamura; 2nd Jacqueline Lee.
U2500: 1st Misha Kazantsev; 2nd Yosmely Vadillo.
U2375: 1st Yosmely Vadillo; 2nd Samson Dubina.
U2250: 1st Sean C. Lee; 2nd Atha Fong.
U2125: 1st W Hao Chen; 2nd Paul Sydell.
U1850: 1st David S. Chu; 2nd Barry Or.
U1700: 1st Tomas Fuentes-Aflleck; 2nd David Chow.
U1550: 1st Kenneth Zhao; 2nd Do Tran.
U1400: 1st John James Alto; 2nd Jagannath Bodapatia.
U1250: 1st David Hanson; 2nd Jordan Fisher.
U1100: 1st Brian Chen; 2nd Victor Kretov.

USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE • January/February 2006
The Positioning of Jan-Ove Waldner

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

Photos by Diego Scharf © 2005
The upper sequence turns out to be a soft push or drop shot. Classic theory would have taught stepping in with the right foot for that. That presupposes the decision to push and then the execution of the footwork - but it also telegraphs your decision to your opponent. Waldner chooses a cross-step. This, while less safe (because of the difficulty in recovering from it), leaves him many more options for a high-quality shot. He can delay the decision whether to loop much longer, he can execute a powerful flick by pivoting around the left foot, or he can do a drop shot. And all the while the opponent can't move, because he has no clue what will happen.

The lower sequence shows what one might consider the extreme opposite of a drop shot on the forehand - a wide turn put-away loop. Yet he got to it starting almost exactly the same way. And therein lies the magic. Playing Waldner must really be like a box of chocolate - you never know what you get.
The Table Ten

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Thank you,
Michael B.

Mr. Jack Kabraolian,

A while ago I purchased a table tennis racket from your company and just a few days ago I bought some more accessories from you. I found your product line, pricing, and website are the best on the Internet.

Kevin C.

Dear Angie,

Thank you so much for your kind note, gifts, and fast shipment of my order. I received the package yesterday afternoon just a few hours less than two days! It’s been my first order with you and quite frankly the most hassle-free and quickest one I’ve ever had. Please extend my thanks and best wishes to all at Ping-Pong.com.

Happy Holidays,
Fred H.

Hello Angie,

Thank you so much for your kind note, gifts, and fast shipment of my order. I received the package yesterday afternoon just a few hours less than two days! It’s been my first order with you and quite frankly the most hassle-free and quickest one I’ve ever had. Please extend my thanks and best wishes to all at Ping-Pong.com.

Happy Holidays,
Fred H.

Dear Alain and Anastasia,

Your customer service is superb. Just received my newly assembled blade and the workmanship is excellent. It’s a pleasure doing business with your company.

Stan L.

Angie,

I envy you for having a team of such high-energy and “customer matters to us” people. Each of those who I interacted with probably knew from the start that I am inclined towards the TTmatic 500-B and that I was looking for detailed information to make that choice as my final decision. There was no pressure to rush me on it from any of them. Not many businesses are as effective in fostering a team-play or even getting the desired results. Thanks to all your folks who, IMO, are competently helping the running of a good business, the good way.

Thanks for your feedback. I’ll track the shipment. Meanwhile, I now need to find a coach who can help with my robot drills for my penhold style.

Cheers,
Ravi

Sean,

Really really thanks for replying ASAP and helping me out. I am glad this country has a table tennis champ like you in it. You really deserve it!

Siddhesh K.

Our club would like to express our sincere gratitude for your sponsorship of the 2005 First Markham Place Summer Table Tennis Tournament held at First Markham Place Mall, Markham, Ontario, on the weekend of July 23-24, 2005. The two-day event attracted more than 70 players of different levels from the Greater Toronto Area. We estimate there were 600 spectators watching this tournament. They were amazed by the professional skills of all the players' performances. Above all, the players loved the Stiga Competition balls and TTP key chains sponsored by The Table Tennis Pioneers. In fact, some spectators in the mall thought that our club's name is “The Table Tennis Pioneers—Ping-Pong.com” because your Company's banner was placed right in front of our control desk. As the organizer/coordinator of this tournament on behalf of the Chinese Cultural Centre of Toronto, I would like to sincerely thank The Table Tennis Pioneers—Ping-Pong.com for your support in promoting table tennis at the Greater Toronto Area. Your TTP key chains helped raise more than $300 for the expansion of Phase 2 of The Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Toronto.

We believe that your company's products and image have impressed all our players and spectators. Looking forward to our future cooperation in the coming sanctioned tournament.

Raymond Leung
Vice President of House Leagues and Tournaments
Scarborough Kings Table Tennis Club

Hi Mitch:

wow....... such a quick response........

I started playing table tennis again this week after being "idle" for a while. I placed an order recently and you (the company) sent me your catalog as well along with them.

I was surprised when I saw it. It contains much more information than the catalog I got 2 or 3 years back..... :)!

Keep up the good job,

Henry

Hi Mitch,

Thank you for your follow up on my order. Your concern for your customers satisfaction is apparent and has impressed me. You've just gained another satisfied customer. I'm sure to spread the word about your excellent customer service to my fellow table tennis friends.

Thank you,

Niles N.

I run an arcade for a water park resort and I get all my Ping-Pong supplies from your web site. I'm not "kissing up", but every time I have dealt with your company, weather it be online or on the phone, I have always gotten top notch service. I wanted to make sure that I passed that on and said thanks!

Michael M.

We are eager to help you. We are fluent in the following languages: English, French, Cantonese, Mandarin, Spanish, Italian, Greek, Arabic, Hebrew, and Armenian.

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