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Patrick Baum's sensational achievement in becoming the first European Junior World Singles Champion was accomplished despite the challenge of Japanese, Chinese, Taiwanese and Korean players. Following the great Swedish Champions - Jan-Ove Waldner (six times World Champion), Jorgen Persson (five times World Champion) and Mikael Appelgren (four times World Champion), a German player secures a World Title for the DONIC brand - a first for Germany! His DONIC teammate and Junior-European Champion, Dimitrij Ovtcharov, remained unbeaten in the team event and helped Germany to a further World Medal as the best European Team.

DONIC is the choice for The Next Generation!

For more information, specs, and prices on all DONIC products, contact us today: visit ping-pong.com/ttpioneers, call us at 1-800-319-PING (7464), fax us at 1-800-319-PONG (7664), or email us at ttpioneers@ping-pong.com
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LIGHT-WEIGHT TABLE TENNIS
SUPER CORE CARBON LIGHT - ALL ADVANTAGES IN YOUR HANDS

ANDRO NORTH AMERICAN DISTRIBUTOR

Table Tennis players are continually asking for lighter but firmer blades. andro's research has worked on daunting question and believe we have found a viable solution – The new Super Core Carbon light series which are 70g and up to 20% lighter than other traditional carbon blades.

FEELING - "Not faster - but more precise." Today's top player demands the highest standards from their blades, especially in regards to feedback and steady ball control. The Super Core center in the handle is geared for fast absorption of vibration and reduces the discomfort of excessive resonance. The carbon fiber layers enhance the sweet spot and provide excellent control.

BALANCE - Perfectly coordinated weight-balance allows a fast handling amongst forehand and backhand strokes for players of all levels. These superlight blades minimize the exhaustion during the play and allow shots and faster arm movements while playing topspins and smashes. Short net-play is easy due to the lightweight design.

SPEED - Despite their light mass, Super Core light blades provide high acceleration. Excellently coordinated veneers, additionally strengthened by thin and super-light carbon-fibers, enable fantastic energy-transfer and effective power.

MATERIAL - Elastic and super thin carbon-fibers guarantee high stiffness. In contrast to classic blades that begin to age prematurely, deterioration of Super Core Carbon light blades starts very late and much slower. The advantage: Same constant features and ball feeling for many wears. Moreover, the carbon fiber strengthened construction reduces the risk of breakage significantly.

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For more information, specs, and prices on all andro products, contact us today: visit ping-pong.com/tpioneers, call us at 1-800-319-PING or 1-800-319-PONG (76641), fax us at 1-800-319-PONG (76641), or email us at tpioneers@ping-pong.com
USATT is pleased to announce the 2005 Coaches of the Year. Congratulations to these four coaches!

USATT National Coach of the Year
Sean O'Neill

As the lead coach for U.S. Paralympic Table Tennis, Sean O'Neill was the head coach for the 2005 Para Pan Am Championships in Mar Del Plata, Argentina. The U.S. team brought home eleven medals and four players qualified for the 2006 World Championships to be held in Montreux, Switzerland. In the final competition of the year, Sean led a 28-player squad at the 2005 U.S. Open Paralympic Championships in Las Vegas that garnered two Golds, one Silver and two Bronze Medals against a field of players from over twenty countries.

USATT Developmental Coach of the Year
Grace Lin

Grace Lin is a full-time coach for the San Gabriel Valley Table Tennis Club. Several students from the San Gabriel Valley Club were members of the U.S. Junior and Cadet National Teams. Players coached by Grace in 2005 include Jeff Huang, Steven Chan, Alicia Wei, Sophia Dan Dan Yi (members of 2005 cadet and Junior National Teams), Jonathan Chen, Christian Roberts, Anand Engineer, Ellen Hwang, Ethan Chua and Marielle Chua. Grace's students medaled in numerous age and rating events at the 2005 U.S. Open and 2005 U.S. Nationals.

USATT Volunteer Coach of the Year
Daniel Rutenberg

Daniel Rutenberg has been an active member of USATT for many years. Mr. Rutenberg has been an active and competitive table tennis player and involved in helping the local table tennis clubs and organizations in the DFW area. Daniel volunteered as a coach to the 2005 Maccabi Games hosted in Dallas during the summer of 2005. Table Tennis Team Dallas won 16 medals during the summer Jewish Community Center (JCC) Maccabi Games in 2005.

"DOC" Counsilman Science Award
Robert Trudell

Rob Trudell has taken Video analysis to the next level. He spends countless hours filming and converting matches, lessons and warm-up into digital format and then posting them online or on CDs and DVDs for all players of all levels to learn from.

---

**2005 USATT Athletes of the Year**

**Gao Jun - Female Athlete of the Year**
- World Championships - Women's Singles Quarterfinalist
- China Taipei ITTF/Pro Tour - Women's Singles & Doubles Champion
- Swedish ITTF/Pro Tour - Women's Singles Semifinalist
- China Volkswagen/ITTF Pro Tour - Women's Singles Quarterfinalist and Women's Doubles Semifinalist
- China Panasonic Open - Women's Singles Quarterfinalist and Women's Doubles Semifinalist
- U.S. Open ITTF/Pro Tour - Women's Singles Quarterfinalist
- Women's World Cup - Women's Singles Quarterfinalist
- Pro Tour Grand Finals - Women's Doubles Champion and Women's Singles Quarterfinalist

**Adam Hugh - Male Athlete of the Year**
- U.S. Nationals Men's Singles & Doubles Semifinalist, Mixed Doubles Champion, Under 22 Men's Singles Finalist
- College Men's Team Trials Champion
- Mr. Neng-Chin Shih Memorial Top Twelve Junior Boys' Singles Champion
- North American Junior Boys' Singles Champion

**2006 Cadet and Junior National Team Coaches**
- Junior Girls' Coach: Lily Yip
- Junior Boys' Coach: Masaaki Tajima
- Cadet Girls' Coach: Emilia Gheorghe
- Cadet Boys' Coach: Sean O'Neill

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**USATT League Watch**

Sponsored by Paddle Palace and Stiga

**www.usatt.org/league**

By USATT League Director Larry Hodges

Below are the current stats on the USATT League, which now has leagues in 47 states and DC. The League started in September, 2003. Take a trip to www.usatt.org/league, explore the pages, and join — or start! — a league! – a league!

Active Leagues 156
Participants 4505
Matches 62,033
Club of the Month: 
Leisure World TTC
A Role Model for Senior Communities
By Lily Yip, USATT Vice President

Lily Yip (center, light blue shirt) with members of the Leisure World TTC. Olga Kahan is to her left.

Olga Kahan, USTTA Senior Committee Co-Chairman, was a wonderful hostess for my visit this past January 18th to the Leisure World Table Tennis Club in beautiful Laguna Woods, California.

The club is located on El Toro Boulevard in the state-of-the-art Leisure World Community Center. The center is a modern three-story stucco building that says "California" to all the visitors, especially the competitors in the annual Meiklejohn Senior Open the first weekend of June.

It was a perfectly warm and clear day during my visit, unlike New Jersey, where it was cold and gray. When I entered the club, the members gave me a very warm welcome. I told myself this is the place I would like to retire to.

The club is on the third floor and has great conditions, including good lighting, wood flooring, ten tables, two robots, and plenty of space for each playing court. Through the windows, visitors view the California hills and countryside. I noticed that all the tables and robots seemed to be in constant use.

I enjoyed playing doubles with many of the club members, showed off some of my trick shots and gave some tips. While I was playing the club members stopped and gathered around my table to watch. Fortunately for me, I did not lose any games.

The Leisure World Table Tennis Club is very active and attracts many residents of the community. The players are of different skill levels and use a variety of equipment from hard bat to the most advanced sponge racquets. They share a great love and enthusiasm for the sport and benefit from the physical training and the social aspects.

According to Olga and many of the club members, the sport of Table Tennis is very beneficial for their health; it strengthens their hand-eye coordination, helps lower their blood pressure and provides cardiovascular exercise. It is one of their favorite activities.

My visit to the Leisure World TTC was the highlight of my trip to California.

Well, what do you know? All these new rules did popularize the sport!
48th WORLD Table Tennis Championships

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Wang Liqin
GOLD MEDAL
#1 World Ranking
Equipment:

DHS Blade Hurricane (H-WL)
DHS Rubber Hurricane (HR2)

Ma Lin
Silver Medal
#2 World Ranking
DHS sponge #20

Wang Hao
#3 World Ranking
DHS rubber (G666)

Lin Gnaotheng
Quater finalist
DHS Rubber (HR3)
DHS Blade Hurricane (H-LG)

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

Guo Yan
Silver Medal
DHS blade Hurricane (H-GY)

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COMBO SPECIAL $101.95 Item: XSOKO CLASS OFF+/ SPEED 99 / CONTROL 53

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POWER TEXA Power and Harmony! Wow, the power and sweet spot of Texalium in an outstanding well-balanced offensive blade with amazing touch! Top quality wood grain and construction and nice feeling handle. Harmony describes the feeling! Handle FL, AN, ST/Wt 84 gm/Plies 5WZX/Blade only $49.95/Item SPT. CLASS OFF+/ SPEED 92 / CONTROL 61

JUIC TORRE Controlled offense has a new unit of measure with the Torre. Unique veneer combination provides good speed in the allround class. The Swedish veneer has outstanding playing characteristics and allows a soft, sensitive ball response on the blade. Includes Jolic's X-Series grip design. Handle FL, AN, ST/Wt 82gm/Plies SW/Blade only $44.95/Item SOTOR. CLASS ALL+ / SPEED 77 / CONTROL 76

PADDLE PALACE: N. AMERICAN DISTRIBUTOR FOR JOOLA PRODUCTS

MAMBO RUBBER SPECIALS

MAMBO C Hardest topspin + extreme fresh gluing! Best advance in classic Japanese offensive rubbers! Best quality upper surface gives best longevity and is extremely grippy. Get best sound and performance when rubber is heavily stretched when gluing. Sponge: 1.5, 1.8, 2.1, MAX Reg $38.95/Item: XSOKO SPEED 9.2 / SPIN 9.2 / CONTROL 7.1 / POWER 9.3

MAMBO H The spin miracle! Latest development from Japan, with slightly harder sponge than MAMBO. Special gluing technique on the tense upper rubber, combines with the sponge, to give incredible natural tension within the rubber. Made for topspin play and offers unimaginable opportunities to the offensive player and offsets spin loss when playing with the 40 mm ball. Made of hard pin wood, Limba for stabilization, Texalium for the big Sweet Spot, very thin Balsa core - just uncompromising offense. Ball feedback is assured due to the sensor-optimized T-Nut grip in the proven RAG+ technology. Handle FL, AN, ST/Wt 81 gm/Plies SW, 2T/Blade only $61.95/Item SOKO. CLASS OFF+/ SPEED 99 / CONTROL 53

COMBO SPECIAL $91.95 Item: XSOKO TR

TEXALIUM Medium-weight 5-ply blade with excellent control and great feel. If you want the most versatile allround blade, this is it! Handle FL, AN, ST/Wt 85 gm/Plies: 3W, 2.5/Blade only $49.95/Item SPTA. CLASS ALL+ / SPEED 90 / CONTROL 73

SEE THE PADDLE PALACE JUIC AD IN THIS ISSUE FOR GREAT NEW JUIC PRODUCTS AND MORE!

DRIVA'SMASH Cadillac of rubber sheets, used by Carl Pragn and other World-Class players. One of the fastest rubber sheets with excellent spin. Made for topspin play and good for smashing and counter driving. Sponge: 1.5, 2.0, 2.5, Reg $31.95/Item RDR. SPEED 8.8 / SPIN 8.2 / CONTROL 7.5 / POWER 8.5

VARITIES Innovative polymer combination creates a tighter molecular structure, giving the greatest spring effect and largest sweet spot. Elastic High Tension sponge adds even greater spin, control and explosive power with outstanding stability. Sponge: 1.8, 2.0, 2.5 Reg $35.95/Item RWA. SPEED 8.9 / SPIN 5.1 / CONTROL 6.7 / POWER 6.9

NITTAKU OFFICIAL BALL FOR TABLE TENNIS

Nittaku 3 Star Premium Balls

Nittaku 3 Star Premium Balls

MAMBO and MAMBO TENSION SPECIALS

MAMBO E Very fast and effective blade with a unique style and a special wood structure. Made of hard pin wood, Limba for stabilization, Texalium for the big Sweet Spot, very thin Balsa core - just uncompromising offense. Ball feedback is assured due to the sensor-optimized T-Nut grip in the proven RAG+ technology. Handle FL, AN, ST/Wt 81 gm/Plies SW, 2T/Blade only $61.95/Item SOKO. CLASS OFF+/ SPEED 99 / CONTROL 53

COMBO SPECIAL $93.95 Item: XSOKO TR

KNITAKU OFFICIAL BALL FOR TABLE TENNIS

NITTAKU ARUCROSS and NITTAKU ARUCROSS TENSION SPECIALS

Both NARUCROSS and NARUCROSS TENSION are made with the latest technology: CROSS® (Crosstex Synergy System). CROSS technology is at the core of innovation in rubber. The new bonding system between sponge and top sheet guarantees superior fresh glue effect, resilient top sheet and more powerful top-spin shots with bigger arc. Sponge: 1.6, 1.8, 2.0, 2.2, Max Reg $39.95/Item NCR. CLASS OFF+/ SPEED 8.8 / SPIN 9.5 / CONTROL 7.5 / POWER 9.6

NARUCROSS TENSION Item: NRTAN SPEED 9.1 / SPIN 9.3 / CONTROL 7.5 / POWER 9.4

5% Discount on orders over $130. Offers expire 4/13/06

WE WILL MATCH OUR COMPETITORS’ PRICES!
SUPER CARBON WRB

Now "High tech" blade with the finest quality Veneer layers with wood, combined with a new carbon quality, make the blade very fast and with a perfect balance. Has the WRB system. Handle FL(lg),(sm), AN, ST / WT 86 gm / Piles: 3L, 3C / Blade only $96.95 / Item: XSSC. CLASS OFF+ / SPEED 94 / CONTROL 59

OPTIMUM SYNC

Many players choose the fastest blade on the market with the idea that it will improve their offense. However, experienced players realize that not only must you be able to produce lethal attacking shots, but you must also be able to defend and counter the loops and smashes of your opponent. STIGA designed this blade with the ideal mixture of speed and control that today's player's needs. Handle: FL(lg), FL(sm), AN, ST / WT 82 gm / Piles: SW / Price $74.95 / Item: XSSOP. CLASS OFF+ / SPEED 88 / CONTROL 71

ALLROUND EVOLUTION

Suitable for the modern, allround player who exploits every variation of speed and spin. The blade of Evolution is based on the Stiga Allround Classic, but it is faster. Handle FL(lg), FL(sm), AN, ST / WT 84 gm / Piles: SW / Price $34.95 / Item: XSSWALE. CLASS ALL+ / SPEED 90 / CONTROL 71

MENDO MP

High-tech rubber that revolutionizes your touch and sets new standards in transforming energy. Great speed but with excellent touch and control. STIGA research lab and the world's leading players have developed Power-soft-rubber for absolute world class performance. Special sponge creates maximum friction on the ball. Handle 1.8, 2.0, 2.3. Reg $28.95. Item: RSSM. SPEED 9.6 / SPIN 8.0 / POWER 7.9

MENDO ENERGY

MENDO A great rubber for attacking and offensive play. The extremely resilient sponge gives players what they are looking for. Four-time world Champ Peter Karlsson plays with Mendo. Sponge 1.8, 2.0, 2.3. Reg $28.95. Item: RSSM. SPEED 8.8 / SPIN 8.2 / POWER 8.1

MENDO BALL CATCHER

Handy for picking up balls. Saves stress on your back! Great for robot use or drill practice. Reg. $17.95. Item: MSBC

Paddle Palace V-989 Robot

The Paddle Palace V-989 Robot is high-quality, sturdy, reliable, and easy to set up and operate. Made of Al-alloy, quality steel, and durable plastic materials. Designed with an automatic ball recycle and net collection system. No jamming or ball-blocking! Recommended for families, schools, clubs, and individuals. Features include:

- No assembly required. Comes ready to play!
- Ball recycle and net collection system
- Rolls from storage to table for very quick setup/take-down
- Convenient robot control from player's side of table
- Topspin, underspin, sidespin
- Adjustable ball frequency 30 to 90 per minute
- Adjustable ball speed 4 to 35 m/sec
- Advanced oscillation options

Features:

- New oscillation options!
- Top quality materials
- Compact and portable design
- Easy setup and operation
- Automatic ball recycle system

Price includes shipping to contiguous U.S.A.

Great Buy at $1,029.99

Paddle Palace V-989 Robot includes:

FREE gross (12 dozen) Nittaku Young Star Balls

"I really like this robot! We use it all the time at the club for both our junior camps and adult programs. The kids have a great time and the adults really get a work out."

Fan Yi Yong
#1 Rated player in the USA.

Everything for the Table Tennis Player!
President’s & Executive Director’s Report
By Sheri Soderberg Pittman & Doru Gheorghe

USATT’s 2005 Annual Report

Dear USATT Members,

USATT promotes table tennis participation and the development of table tennis athletes’ skills at all levels through programs for table tennis coaches and officials. Below is a brief recap about USATT activities, programs and services provided to its members in 2005.

USATT Coaching Certification System – Ongoing process for certification and education of US coaches. Any USATT member who fulfills the criteria could become a certified coach and then advance to the next coaching level. The certified coaches help teach the young kids and members of all ages the necessary skills to become good players, and keep their body in good shape.

USATT held four coaching seminars:
- Coaching seminar - Open to all coaches from US - Colorado Springs, CO, Feb. 11-13, 2005
- Coaching seminar - Open to all coaches from US - Ft. Lauderdale, FL, July 7, 2005
- Coaching seminar - Open to all coaches from US - Colorado Springs, CO, Sept. 30-Oct. 2, 2005
- Coaching seminar - Open to all coaches from US - Las Vegas, NV, Dec. 15, 2005

USATT has 392 active certified coaches.

USATT Officials – Ongoing process for certification and education of US umpires and referees conducted by the Rules and Officials Committee. Any USATT members that fulfill the criteria could become a certified umpire and then advance to the next level. USATT has 264 active Umpires, including 39 International Umpires. There are 36 certified Referees, 8 at the International level and 8 at the National level.

USATT Sanctioned Tournaments – In 2005, USATT sanctioned over 220 tournaments during 2005. The tournaments were sanctioned by the Tournament Committee through the Regional Tournament Coordinators. These tournaments were open to all members and contained events for all ages and levels. The tournaments were organized according to USATT standards, under tournament director coordination and following the International Table Tennis Federation laws. USATT set and supervised the level of the tournaments, certified umpires/officials for those tournaments and processed the ratings of each participant according to the results.

USA Table Tennis Magazine – The bimonthly magazine issued by our organization contains information related to table tennis activities in the U.S., including coaching (tactics, techniques, sports psychology and nutrition), tournament coverage, player profiles and interviews, ratings & rankings, reports, and other information related to the sport. Magazines were sent to all USATT members. The magazine is now in many bookstores and newsstands, promoting the sport and USATT beyond the membership.

USATT Web Page – USATT maintained and updated on a weekly basis the USATT web page, www.usatt.org, in order to keep members informed about all aspects of table tennis activities in the US such as: schedule and results of sanctioned tournaments, ratings of each member updated weekly, ITTF news, USOC updates, coaching seminars, news about clubs in the US and programs throughout the country, officials and umpires listing, national teams news, results and other information related to table tennis activities in the US and all over the world.

National Teams – In 2005 USATT funded the following programs for its National Teams as follows:

National Junior and Cadet Teams:
- Training camp and participation in the Swedish International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) World Junior Circuit (WJC), Orebro, SWE, Feb. 19-27, 2005
- North American Championships (juniors & cadets) and cadet training camp, Montreal, Canada, March 22-27, 2005
- Training camp and participation in Spain’s ITTF WJC, Plata D’aro, May 9-15, 2005
- ITTF Women’s Developmental Training Camp, Vancouver, CAN, June 28-July 3, 2005
- US Open ITTF Pro Tour, Ft. Lauderdale, FL, July 7-10, 2005
- Summer Training Camp, Palm Beach, FL, July 11-22, 2005
- Canadian ITTF WJC (cadets & juniors) and junior training camp, Vancouver, CAN, July 29-Aug. 5, 2005
- USATT Women’s Developmental Training Camp (juniors & cadets), China, Aug. 6-22, 2005
- Brazil ITTF WJC, Piracicaba, BRA, Sept. 8-11, 2005
- World Cadet Challenge Cup, Santo Domingo, Oct. 23-30, 2005
- ITTF World Junior Circuit Finals - Santo Domingo, Oct. 23-30, 2005

Women’s and Men’s National Teams:
- Training camp, Shanghai, China, April 17-24, 2005
- World Championships, Shanghai, CHN, April 25-May 6, 2005
- NA Championships, Montreal, CAN, March 25-27, 2005
- US Open ITTF Pro Tour, Ft. Lauderdale, FL, July 7-10, 2005

USATT funded our top female player Gao Jun participation in 4 ITTF Pro Tours
- Pro Tour Panasonic China Open, Sept. 8-11, 2005
- Pro Tour Volkswagen China Open, Sept. 15-18, 2005
- Pro Tour Liebherr German Open, Nov. 9-13, 2005
- Pro Tour Liebherr Swedish Open, Nov. 17-20, 2005
- Volkswagen Pro Tour Grand Finals, Fuzhou, CHN, Dec. 9-11, 2005

Competitions organized by USATT – USATT organized the following competitions:
- Liebherr US Open ITTF/Pro Tour - Ft. Lauderdale, FL, July 7-10, 2005 - over 700 participants - open to all USATT and ITTF members.
- National Championships - Las Vegas, NV, Dec. 14-17, 2005 - over 870 participants - open to all USATT members.

USATT League, which has 155 active leagues, with 4451 players and 60,732 processed matches in its first 28 months.

The 2006 US National Team members are:
- Women: Gao Jun, Jasna Reed, Crystal Huang, Nan Li.
- Men: Ilija Lapuleksu, Mark Hazinski, Adam Hugh, Barney Reed
- Junior Girls: Judy Hugh, Ahtia Fong, Stephanie Shih, Barbara Wei.
- Junior Boys: Adam Hugh, John Leach, Trevor Runyan, Misha Kazantsev.
- Cadet Girls: Olena Sowers, Ariel Hsing, Amy Huang, Alicia Wei.

Results at international competition and awards accomplished by members of our National, Junior and Cadet Team in 2005:
- USA Women – Gao Jun – 2005 Female Athlete of the Year (See article page 9).

By Sheri Soderberg Pittman & Doru Gheorghe
Junior National Teams
- Adam Hugh - 2005 Male Athlete of the Year (See article page 9).
- NA Championships - Adam Hugh winner junior boys’ singles, and semifinalist junior boys’ doubles with Misha Kaczantsev.
- NA Championships - Judy Hugh finished 2nd in the junior girls’ singles, 2nd place in junior girls’ doubles with Barbara Wei and 3rd place junior girls’ doubles Laura Xiao and Sophia Yi.
- Canada ITTF WJC - Judy Hugh/Barbara Wei 3rd place junior girls’ team and junior girls’ doubles.
- Brazil ITTF WJC - Barbara Wei 3rd place junior girls’ singles event, Barbara Wei/Laura Xiao 3rd place junior girls’ doubles event.

Cadet National Teams
- World Cadet Challenge Cup - 5th place cadet girls’ team event and 7th place cadet boys’ team event.
- ITTF/WJC Brazil - 2nd place cadet boys’ team event and 4th place cadet girls’ team event.
- NA Championships - Jeff Huang 2nd place, cadet boys’ singles and Steven Chan semifinalist cadet boys’ singles.
- NA Championships - Jeff Huang/Steven Chan, 2nd place cadet boys’ doubles.
- NA Championships - Stephanie Shih 2nd place cadet girls’ singles, Olena Sowers 3rd place cadet girls’ singles.
- NA Championships - Olena Sowers/Alicia Sowers 2nd place cadet girls’ doubles, and Stephanie Shih/Jennifer Mast 3rd place cadet girls’ doubles.
- Canada ITTF WJC - Jeff Huang/Steven Chan 1st place cadet boys’ team and cadet boys’ doubles events. Jeff Huang 2nd place cadet boys’ singles and Steven Chan 3rd place cadet boys’ singles.
- Canada ITTF WJC - Stephanie Shih/Olena Sowers 3rd place cadet girls’ team event and 2nd place cadet girls’ doubles.
- Tamamisu Butterfly Scholarship Recipient - Olena Sowers

USATT awarded financial incentives based on performance and stipends to its National Team members and coaches.

US Paralympics
Although USATT is not the NGB for Paralympics, it does provide some financial and administrative support. USATT wishes to acknowledge the following achievements and programs:
- Para Pan Am Championships, Mar Del Plata, ARG - 11 medals and four players qualified for the 2006 World Championships.
- US Open Paralympics Championships, Las Vegas, NV - two gold, one silver, and two bronze medals.

US Collegiate Table Tennis
USATT provided financial support for the following events:
- ACIT/Collegiate Nationals, Ft. Worth, TX, April 1-2, 2005
- NCTTA Women’s College Team Championships, Ft. Worth, TX, April 1-2, 2005
- US Collegiate Tennis Tournaments, Las Vegas, NV, Dec. 14, 2005
The 2006 Collegiate Team’s members are:
Women: Whitney Ping, Jackie Lee, Katherine Wu, Amanda Dubina.
Men: Adam Hugh, Hui Xiao, Shashin Shodhan, Pan Lin.

We would like to thank all USATT members, volunteers, staff, Board and committee members, officials, sponsors and, of course, the USOC and the USATT Foundation, for supporting the development of table tennis in USA.

2006 US Open in Charlotte
USATT is pleased to announce the 2006 US Open will be held in Charlotte, NC, July 5-8, 2006 at the Charlotte Convention Center. Official Headquarter Hotel is The Hilton Charlotte Center City. To reserve your room please call 1-800-HILTONS and request the special group rate for USATT 2006 US Open of $89+tax for single or double room.
The deadline to make your reservation at the special rate is June 16, 2006. The number of rooms at this special rate is limited and will be assigned based on first come first served. Watch for further news at www.usatt.org.
USATT League of the Month: Genesee Valley TTC League

By Mary Beth MacClaren

The GVTTC in Rochester, NY, has been around as a club since the 1930’s, and has given rise to many great players, sponsored both local and national tournaments, and helped keep the sport of table tennis alive and well in Western New York. Currently located in the Rochester Sports Garden, the club is highly visible to baseball, soccer, basketball, and lacrosse players of all ages...some of them have even signed on to sub in the league! It is not unusual to look over the barrier and see a row of young faces watching the players and learning how athletic the sport of table tennis really is!

This season is the club’s first year of participation in the USATT league program. Allen Estill, league director, and the GVTTC executive committee decided to pay the USATT league membership for all 44 players in the Monday Night League. As a result of the weekly ratings updates, the league has seen an increase in members attending USATT rated events in order to “test out” their league ratings. Every week league members play three matches, each one with three differently rated opponents ranging from beginner to veteran players. In addition, the league members are all provided with lessons with Coach Ray Mack, a nationally ranked player who has experienced his own success in both sponge and hardbat, and at the National Olympics. The lessons help the players develop their skills and prepare for tournament play.

A challenge ladder gives players further opportunities to play competitive matches with the over 80 club members that are in the Monday and Tuesday leagues and also the recreational players that show up for open play. Participants in the USATT league range from up-and-coming young players like 11-year-old Casey MacClaren to veteran player Bob Brickell who has been playing in Rochester and making paddles for USATT players across the country for over 50 years. Bob has won the U.S. Senior Olympics and is currently ranked 5th nationally in his age group. The wide variety of players allows opportunities for competitive matches for the highest ranking league members, and great learning opportunities for newcomers to the sport. Membership in the USATT league program is the latest addition to GVTTC’s long history as a hot bed for Western NY table tennis!

Table Tennis Crossword Puzzle

By Larry Hodges

It was a good experiment, but when a magazine goes to 8000 people, and only six people turn in answers, there just isn’t enough interest to justify continuing it. Thus the Table Tennis Crossword Puzzle, along with West Wing, settles into the mists of history. But not before we announce those who solved it last issue: Dave Edwards, Jerry I. Golubow, Andy Hutzel, Phillip Smith, John (40) & Sebastian (8) Velasquez, and John C. Whitaker. Hutzel wins the Grand Prize for solving all four puzzles; Golubow gets a Commendation for solving the last three.

They Said It...

By Larry Hodges


“I’m a horrible ping-pong player. Fabulous for one second, awful the next. When we were shooting I heard Woody mumble, ‘Oh, dear...Scarlett can’t hit the ball.’ I took lessons but I still seemed incapable of hitting it. ‘I said, ‘Listen, I was brought up in Manhattan, in a small apartment. We didn’t have a ping-pong table at home’.” - Actress Scarlett Johansson, after director Woody Allen “slagged” her ping-pong skills during a table tennis scene in the movie Match Point. From the Sunday Mail (British newspaper), Dec. 18, 2005. Contributed by John Jarema.

“My best Christmas was when I was in the seventh grade and my parents bought me a pool table and a Ping-Pong table. I was about 13 years old, and I was pretty good in both games. I still am.” - Robbie Gould, kicker for the Chicago Bears, from the Chicago Sun-Times, Dec. 25, 2005. Contributed by John Jarema.

“King Daniel of Sweden is not only the Senators’ MVP, but also remains the team BTTP (Best Table Tennis Player). The No. 1 contender, now that the ping-pong games have resumed outside the dressing room, is rookie Patrick Eaves. ‘Right now, yeah, but everybody’s starting to come out of the woodwork,’ Eaves conceded yesterday. The King admits Eaves is a capable player, but good enough to steal his crown? ‘Maybe,’ he said, ‘when I retire.’” —From Ottawa Sun, Jan. 13, 2006. Contributed by John Jarema.

“If you enjoy a rousing game of ping-pong now and then, you may want to start playing a bit more often. You’ll not only keep your body agile, but you may sharpen your mental dexterity as well. In a recent study in the Japan Medical Journal, two researchers recruited 42 patients suffering from brain tumors, head injuries and other cerebrovascular conditions and introduced them to ping-pong. The researchers discovered that blood flow to the brain increased in all patients—even those without honed skills. Additionally, the level of dementia decreased from high to intermediate in more than half of the patients who who suffered from it.” - From Alternative Medicine, Nov/Dec, 2005, page 30. Contributed by Myles Kleper.

“What can I do to help?” “[Help with, Tommie?]” “I want to help the volunteers take down the tables and pack up the equipment.” —Thomas Keinath at the Killerspin Holiday Open, after he won the Open. He later played with and coached several of the volunteers.
42nd ST JOSEPH VALLEY OPEN
Indiana University at South Bend
May 6th & 7th, 2006
South Bend, IN

Tournament Information

Playing Site:
Indiana University at South Bend
1700 Mishawaka Avenue
South Bend, IN 46634

Maps and directions can be found at www.iusb.edu or www.mayquest.com!!

Tournament Director
Phil Schmucker

Tournament Referee
Peter Chamberlain

Tournament Committee
Brad Balmer
Jason Derrman
Jerry Goeller
Kara Schmucker

Eligibility
St. Joe Valley is open to USATT members or those who join.
All age event cutoffs will be 05/06/06.

Notes:
1) Tournament management may modify, combine, or cancel events, limit entries & assign temporary rating for unrated players.
2) Draws WITHIN a round robin may be modified to avoid state / club duplication, but no modifications will be made BETWEEN round robin events.
3) All USATT rules will be enforced.
4) Events starting after 4 PM on Saturday MAY carryover final rounds to Sunday.
5) Entry Limitations - PLEASE DO NOT enter 2 rated events with same star'tina time OR more than 6 total events.
6) Unrated players may enter any event (except rated doubles), HOWEVER, they will not advance from their Round Robin!!
7) All events will be 3 out of 5 games except Open Singles, Open Doubles and Open Doubles which will be 4 out of 7.
8) Ratings will be from the March/April issue of USA Table Tennis magazine.
9) Any questions regarding the tournament, eligibility, or entry should be directed to Dan Seemiller at (574) 654-7476 between 9:00 AM and 6:00 PM EST.

Tell HOWARD JOHNSON these rooms are for South Bend Table Tennis - Dan Seemiller!
Senior Corner
By Olga & Stan Kahan,
USATT Senior Committee Co-Chairs
949-830-6699 (ph) · 949-240-7167 (fax)
naf@berkeley.edu

These oncoming months, April and May, are lucky ones, highlighted on the world map of table tennis in 2006. The World Team Table Tennis Championships (April 24 – May 1) and the World Veterans Table Tennis Championships (May 15-20) will be held in Bremen, Germany.

After these events the world’s attention will shift to South America. Rio de Janeiro, the bustling and dazzling capital of Brazil, has been chosen to host the World Veterans Championships in 2008. So start building up your energy and ardent desires for these exciting events.

Last December, when we were involved in operations at the USA Nationals in Las Vegas, NV, we met Mr. Mustafa Erbas, an international umpire from Canada. Mr. Erbas, as a visiting umpire, is widely known among U.S. table tennis players. He has also officiated at the U.S. Nationals the past seven years, and also umpired at the Pro-Tour Events in Chicago, IL, and Fort Lauderdale, FL. In addition to his official position as an International Umpire, Mr. Erbas is closely involved with Canadian table tennis, working in Edmonton, Alberta, where the last World Senior Games were held in July. Ninety members of the Canadian Central Senior Table Tennis Association (Mustafa Erbas is its President) are over 55 years old and 50% of them are women. Many are strong players and most of them compete at local, national and international events.

Our USATT Senior Committee is eager to develop further contact with Canadian Senior table tennis active participants in order to work closely together towards our target – to organize the Las Vegas Continental Senior Games in 2007.

Alfred Palumbo, President of Sunrise Sports Foundation, Inc. (Clearwater, FL), together with the Foundation Secretary and Treasurer, Margo Lindsay (“Margo Magnificent!”) won gold in the last Huntsman World Senior Games in Utah. In the same tournament, a Floridian Nahed Williams, the Sunrise Foundation Controller, shared silver medals with Wilfredo Escobar, a regional umpire from California. Sari Kisbany also won silver medals together with her Mixed Doubles partner Barry Meisel from Spain. Lynnwood Smith, a multiple-time gold medalist from Palm Springs, FL, was victorious at various international Veterans Games.

Alfred Palumbo is proud of his fellow Floridians, particularly, for their involvement in the Sunrise Sports Foundation. This successful non-profit charitable organization promotes low-cost or free athletic competitions and educational clinics for all adults, mature and young. For more information about the Sunrise Sports Foundation in Clearwater, FL, call 727-669-0899 or email Margo.lindsay@SunriseTableTennis.com.

The 2006 Stiga North American Tour stops are set and in conjunction with these main events, the senior events – the “Sol Feingold Memorial Competitions” are also scheduled, as follows:

**Western Open, Berkeley, CA** …….. Feb. 18-19
**So Cal Open, San Diego, CA** …….. Apr. 15-16
**San Diego Open, San Diego, CA** …….. May 6-7
**New Jersey Open, Piscataway, NJ** …….. June 17-18
**Eastern Open, Piscataway, NJ** …….. Aug. 5-6
**Berkeley Open, Berkeley, CA** …….. Sept. 2-3
**Lafayette Open, Easton, PA** …….. Oct. 7-8

According to Alan Williams (NATT), final arrangements are being made now.

The Melkiejohn Senior Games in PA will once again run in conjunction with the four-star Quaker City Open (March 11-12), the week following the U.S. Open Team Championships in Reno, NV (March 3-5).

Be ready for senior competitions in 2006 and keep the ball on the table! Good luck to you all!

An Official’s View
By “Dr. Azmy”

I was pleased to learn that we had nearly 900 players at the U.S. Nationals, a record.

And it was an experiment to add the U.S. Open Paralympics with the Nationals, which added another 139 players. It was inspirational to see the athleticism of Paralympics athletes from around the world. However, it placed a severe strain on the umpires; we didn’t have enough to handle both tournaments as well as we would have liked.

We need more umpires to work our major tournaments. We have recently increased the travel subsidy that should make it possible for more umpires to travel to tournaments. At the Nationals we used a few club umpires and they worked out very well. Club umpires who wish to work the major tournaments should get as much experience as possible locally. For future tournaments we will invite club umpires that are recommended by local referees.

Now that the rules have been changed to encourage wheelchair players to compete in all events, umpires must be familiar with the new wheelchair rules.

In the last article we discussed the let situation when a wheelchair player is receiving the serve. The ball is a let if it comes to a stop on his side of the table, or after bouncing it returns toward the net, or (in singles) it leaves over the sidelines.

- If, after it bounces on the table, he tries to hit it and misses it completely, and then it crosses the sidelines, it is still a let as long as he did not touch it at all.
- If, after it bounces on the table, it crosses the sidelines and he then strikes it and makes a good return, it is still a let because once it crosses the sideline the ball is a let. The same applies if he strikes it and he does not make a good return; the ball is a let.
- Suppose that after it bounces toward the sidelines he strikes the ball before it crosses the sideline. In this case the ball is in play and the rally continues.

Suppose in a doubles event two wheelchair players are playing against two standing players:

- After the serve & receive, either wheelchair player can make returns.
- If a wheelchair player plays doubles with a standing athlete they must alternate returns.
- If a wheelchair crosses the imaginary middle line their opponent wins the point.

On the wheelchair player’s side, the wheelchair rules apply. On the standing player’s side, the regular players’ rules apply, which means they have to alternate returns.

Let me conclude the wheelchair discussion with a final word of advice. Most regular tables are not wheelchair qualified. That may create some difficulties when wheelchair players play in a regular event. It is recommended that wheelchair players sign a waiver of liability before they play on a regular table.

Here are questions that have been asked by umpires. The first is very common. The umpire says the ball hit the table. Player A, who lost the point, argues that the ball did not hit. In the middle of the argument, Player B admits that the ball missed the table. What should the umpire do? The umpire should reverse the call.

Umpires sometimes face difficult situations as a match begins. Suppose a player wants to practice:

- in his training suit.
- with a different shirt.
- with a different racket.

The umpire should ask the player to take off his training suit, play with the same racket that has been inspected for the match, and wear the same shirt. If the player refuses the umpire should call the referee.

In a doubles match, players A & B are playing against Y & X. In the middle of a rally A drops his racket on the floor, and then grabs his partner’s racket and makes a good return. Y is confused and fails to make a good return. Who gets the point and why? When A grabbed his partner’s racket, he changed his racket although it wasn’t damaged. Their opponents win the point and no further action is required.
Meiklejohn National Seniors Open Table Tennis Tournament- Over $16,000 in Prizes
June 1, 2, 3, 4, 2006 Laguna Woods, California: Clubhouse 5

**Major Sponsor**
William Meiklejohn

**Additional Sponsors**
Nittaku, Paddle Palace, Golden Rain Foundation, L.W. Table Tennis Club

**Directors**
Ray Kunze, Director, (949) 563-1695
Olga Kahan, Tournament Committee Chair (949) 830-6696
Walt Wehrli, Treasurer
Craig Krum, computer operations coordinator

**Referee**
Tom Miller

**Eligibility**
Players must be 40 or over by December 31, 2005, and legal US, or North American residents. Players must be USATT members, and those whose USATT memberships expire before the end of the tournament, must include membership fees with their entry forms.

**Ratings**
Ratings are the USATT ratings listed in the March-April issue of the USA Table Tennis Magazine. Players without ratings may participate in all events except rated doubles but may only advance in age events.

**Events Restrictions**
No more than four events per day. No more than two doubles events per day; attempts will be made to find doubles partners for those who need them.

**Rules**
All rules of the USATT will govern and be enforced. Players must wear their player numbers while on the playing floor. Games will be 11 points; matches will be 3 of 5 games, except for the semifinals and finals of the Over 40 Singles, which will be 4 of 7.

**Application Dates and Cutoff**
All entries and fees should be postmarked by Monday, May 8, 2006: we guarantee the acceptance of the first 260 entries. For late entries, there is a fee of $4.00

**Accommodations**
Ayres Hotel, 24341 El Toro Road, Laguna Woods, CA 92637-4011: free airport shuttle and full breakfast, a special rate of $109.00 per night for reservations made before May 1, 2006.

**Equipment**
Stiga and Butterfly tables and white and orange Nittaku 40 millimeter balls.

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

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Events</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Prizes</th>
<th>Fee</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, June 1</td>
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<td>1. Under 1100 RR</td>
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<td>2. Over 1100 RR</td>
<td>10:00 am</td>
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<td>3. Over 90 RR</td>
<td>11:00 am</td>
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<td>4. Women over 60 RR</td>
<td>11:00 am</td>
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<td>5. Under 2300 Doubles</td>
<td>11:00 am</td>
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<td>6. Over 85 RR</td>
<td>12:00 pm</td>
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<td>7. Under 2800 Doubles</td>
<td>1:00 pm</td>
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<td>8. Under 1450 RR</td>
<td>2:00 pm</td>
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<td>9. Over 75 Doubles</td>
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<td>10. Women over 70 RR</td>
<td>3:30 pm</td>
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<td>Friday, June 2</td>
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<td>11. Under 1200 RR</td>
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<td>12. Over 75 RR</td>
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<td>13. Women over 50 RR</td>
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<td>14. Under 1300</td>
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<td>15. Over 70</td>
<td>11:30 am</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. Over 70 Doubles</td>
<td>12:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>17. Women over 40 RR</td>
<td>12:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>18. Hardbat RR</td>
<td>12:30 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>19. Over 60</td>
<td>1:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>20. Senior Elites RR</td>
<td>2:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>21. Under 4050 Doubles</td>
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| Hall of Fame Banquet          | 7:30 pm | Clubhouse 6 |      |

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<tr>
<td>Saturday, June 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>22. Draw Doubles</td>
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<tr>
<td>23. Over 50</td>
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<td>24. Under 2400 RR</td>
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<td>25. Under 1800</td>
<td>12:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>26. Under 1600 RR</td>
<td>1:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>27. Under 3600 Doubles</td>
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| Player's Party                | 8:00 pm | Clubhouse 5 (Free) |

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<td>Sunday, June 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>28. Under 4200 Doubles</td>
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<tr>
<td>29. Under 1900 RR</td>
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<tr>
<td>30. Under 4800 Doubles</td>
<td>10:30 am</td>
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<tr>
<td>31. Over 40 Singles</td>
<td>11:00 am</td>
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<td>T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Under 2050</td>
<td>12:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>33. Under 2300</td>
<td>1:00 pm</td>
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| * Per Pair                     | 4:00 pm | Clubhouse 6 (Free) |

Send a check, payable to NSTTTA and an entry form to Ray Kunze
110 Via Estrada Unit B
Laguna Woods, CA 92637-4011
by May 1, 2006.

Meiklejohn Entry Form (Please Print)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>ExpDate</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>BirthDate</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<th>Main Club at which you play</th>
<th>USA TT #</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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

**Signature:**

**Fee No. Name of Event Doubles Partner Fee No. Name of Event Doubles Partner**

| $ | Total Events Fees |
| $4.00 | Administration Fee |
| $4.00 | Rating Fee |
| $ | USATT Membership |
| $40.00 per year | CTT Hall of Fame Dinner (optional) |
| $20.00 | TOTAL FEES |
Traveling Miles To Meet
The Great Dick Miles
By Scott Preiss, Pingpoglive.com

Last month I received a letter from a friend and lifetime supporter of table tennis who told me that my son Austin's tenacity in table tennis reminded him of the great Dick Miles, many-time National Champion and World Champion. After reading Bob Viduchich's letter, I thought how great it would be if I could get an autograph from Mr. Miles to send to my friend Bob in Portland, Oregon. So I picked up the phone and called Tim Boggan to ask him for Mr. Miles' phone number.

After Tim gave me the phone number I called Mr. Miles to say hello. Dick told me that he would be glad to send me an autographed photo that I could send to Mr. Viduchich. As luck has it Mr. Miles was going to Honolulu for six months and was going to arrive about the same time that I was going to vacation with my family there. So true to his word Mr. Miles walked over a few blocks to the Hilton Hawaiian Village Resort and met my family and me for a drink.

What an honor for me to spend time with this table tennis legend. I could not help but ask Mr. Miles what were a few of the most memorable experiences playing table tennis. He then told me that he was lucky to have the great Lou Pagliaro as a training partner. He then told me about his experience at the 1947 World Championships in Paris. It was so cold in the arena that Dick did not even want to play. But while blowing smoke out of his mouth, his teammates encouraged him to play anyway. Later on I learned from historian Tim Boggan that they taped hot water bottles to Mr. Miles' body to keep him warm.

When sitting with my son Austin he asked that Austin stand up and show him his forehand and backhand stroke. He immediately made a comment to me that his backhand is great, but his forehand needs more wrist movement. Without ever seeing Austin's game this man was right on the nose. At eighty years old and retired from the sport for many years, he still can see the subtle things needed to be a great player. He recommended to me that I have Austin play penholder style with his forehand for a few weeks. This will help him use more wrists when he plays. The other advice that he gave to Austin is that training in China is the right thing to do. He had no doubt that consistency from playing on the robot would assist Austin in becoming a great player.

So went my afternoon with legend Mr. Dick Miles. I walked away with several autograph photos, a signed Dick Miles paddle for my friend Bob who inspired me to call Mr. Miles in the first place, and a memory of having spent time with the one of the greatest players to ever play the sport of table tennis.

Table Tennis is Not for Geeks
By John Pahl

The woman on the other end of the line identified herself as a producer from the upcoming WB series Beauty and the Geek. The bandwagon this reality show jumped on spins the fish out of water scenario to include geeky, nerdy guys vying for beautiful but vacant women. She contacted me through the USATT website looking for nerds in Charlotte, NC, assuming guys who play ping-pong would most certainly qualify. Since there was a $100,000 cash prize for the winner, I relayed the message to some of our single 21-30 year old members to let them decide for themselves. Most didn't give it a second thought, but one did. He wore glasses. He was an accountant. He played ping-pong. They were salivating. Let's get this straight from the start: "Joe" may have qualified on paper in these people's minds, but in real life he was a typical young man, personable, fit, hard working and hard playing. At our club he was very competitive, climbing up the rating list. An adventurous streak and sense of humor surely prompted considering the offer at all. After meeting with casting agents and submitting a video of himself including his very own table tennis highlight reel, he was deemed unworthy to be a Geek. They expected to see someone pity-pat the ball back and forth, not loop a ball full force at 70 mph or so. Fictional Forest Gump may have done the same. That's not very geeky. Not what they were looking for at all. As a matter of fact the indignation I felt when they first called melted away as we single finger saluted "Beauty and the Geek" over beverages. Adult, manly beverages.
Maryland Table Tennis Center
18761-Q Frederick Rd., Gaithersburg, MD 20879 • (301) 519-8580 • www.mdttc.com

Butterfly
www.butterflyonline.com

All Levels Welcome!

Spring Break Training Camp Dates:
April 10-14

Daily Schedule
10:00 AM - 1:00 PM
3:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Fee
- $250 (MDTTC members: $220)
- Minimum deposit: $50
- Make checks out to MDTTC
- Enter Early! Only first 30 players are guaranteed spots!

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

* Mention "Table Tennis" for best rate.*

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

Coach Cheng Yinghua
- 4-time U.S. Men's Singles Champion
- Member, USA Table Tennis Hall of Fame
- 2000 Olympic Team Member
- #1 Ranked U.S. Player for most of the past 16 years
- Former Head Coach for the Szechuan Province of China
- Chinese National Team, 1977-87
- 1985 & 1993 U.S. Open Men's Champion
- USATT's Coach of the Year, 1996
- Butterfly-sponsored full-time coach
- Certified by USATT as a National Coach

Coach Jack Huang
- Former Head Coach for the Guangxi Province of China
- Chinese National Team, 1976-83
- U.S. #1 Player in 1990
- Former U.S. Senior and Men's Doubles Champion
- USATT's Developmental Coach of the Year, 1997
- Butterfly-sponsored full-time coach
- Certified by USATT as a National Coach

Coach Larry Hodges
- Author of Table Tennis: Steps to Success
- USATT's Developmental Coach of the Year, 2002
- Director/Manager/Coach at Resident Training Program for Table Tennis at Olympic Training Center, 1985-89
- Many-time U.S. Junior Team Coach
- Certified by USATT as a National Coach
- USATT Coaching Chairman, 1991-95
- Former full-time coach
- Member, USA Table Tennis Hall of Fame

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

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Amount Enclosed: $
2005 Hall of Fame Inductee: MARTY PRAGER

By Tim Boggan

In 1950, Chicago teenagers Marvin Prager and Marvin Leff could be found bonding in competitive play at, say, the local Lake States Open. Fifty-five years later, having made their table tennis mark together for decades in Florida, Prager was remembered by Leff and his wife Caron in a congratulatory note read at the 2005 Hall of Fame Banquet in Las Vegas. Recognition he’d always had, but Inductee recognition was a long time coming.

In 1951, a senior in a Windy City high school, Prager was a wanted young man...particularly in synagogues, in Yiddish theater, for he was already a professional singer, had been since he was 8. Five years into a new millennium later, one might see/hear Marty’s dramatic love song to Terese Terranova amid the stars of the Stratosphere, and later, on Finals night at the Closed, his bring-down-the-house rendition of “The Star-Spangled Banner.”

From being a semifinalist in the U.S. Open Under 18’s, Prager quickly graduated to the big time, for at the 1952 National Team Championships (NTC’s) he was a member of the winning Chicago team, and at the 1953 Kansas City National's he forced future 4-time National Champ Erwin Klein into the 9th, after 3 of the games had gone to deuce. Then he paired with former Pacific Coast Champion Abbott Nelson in Men’s Doubles to cause quite a stir. A stylish defensive player like Marvin, their games clicked. Still, their advance was surprising: a 24-22 3rd game helped them to beat Harry Lund and me in 4, then, when, reportedly down 20-15 match point to Schiff and McClure, it appeared all was over for them, they rallied to eke out a 23-21-in-the-5th. After which, though they were lookin' good with a 2-0 lead in the final against Miles and Somael, they couldn’t find the winning finish. Still, U.S. #2 in Doubles wasn’t bad.

In the March, 1954 issue of “Paddle Poop,” the Northern California TTA’s strangely self-deprecating title for its informative Newsletter (though for a while, I readily acknowledge. Steve Isaacson and I were able to hit treated me that on occasion I'd tried my best to slap down a wall or two.)

So when I first met “Marty” Prager—I’ve always called him ‘Marty’—he was quite a player, and so was his prodigy-protégé Norbert “Norby” Van De Walle, just last year inducted into our USTTA Hall of Fame. Like Bernie Bukiet, they played out of Millie Shahian’s Chicago Net & Paddle Club, which for years Marty, directing tournaments there, helped manage, kept running really. I don’t mind telling you—the World’s, Marty, and Norby, through a number of Midwest tournaments on their way to making the 1957 U.S. Team to the Stockholm World’s, had so intensely frustrated me that on occasion I’d tried my best to slap down a wall or two.

In the mid-’50’s, while Norby was winning many Championships, local, regional, and national, he was having almost daily workouts with Marvin, often his winning tournament doubles partner (though for a while, I readily acknowledge, Steve Isaacson and I were able to hit through them). Norby was a lock to make the ’57 U.S. World Team, and, since enough of the Selection Committee members were impressed with Prager’s “runner-up position at both the three-star Central and Western [Opens],” as well as his “outstanding [9-2] play in the NTC’s [National Team Championships]” where in expedite he gave Doug Cartland his only loss, they voted Marty on the team too. So it was settled then, Prager would go to...What’s that? His voice teacher objected, urged him not to go to Sweden, might damage his—but Marty quickly bleeped a VERY high note or two at her. and went off to Stockholm.

Millie Shahian, who was on that ’57 U.S. Team, despised the appointed Team Captain, but had nothing but praise for Prager when after the World’s the Team, committed to giving separate exhibitions, split into two wings. Showing his “sheer love of table tennis,” Millie said, Marve took “charge of the Team touring England, doing by far the best job of all the tours I’ve been on—quietly & efficiently, only interested in the best for the team.”

On returning from the World’s, Marty look-alike in the quarter’s of the 1957 U.S. Open, and Reisman was 19-in-the-4th hard-pressed to beat Prager (U.S. #5 that year). The following season, just before the Men’s NTC’s, Marty hurt his wrist in a match with the strong St. Louis cum Chicago player Allan Levy, and thereafter never felt as comfortable playing as before. But, taking the place of the ailing John Varga, he ran the Women’s Team Championship at the Net and Paddle Club.

In the early ’60’s, Marty’s #1 pupil, Van de Walle, would return to his native Belgium with his family. There he became that country’s #1 player, and more power to him, for Marty always said he was more pleased by Norby’s successes than his own. After continuing to coach other players at his and Millie’s Chicago Club, including 1965 U.S. World Team member Pat Havlick Pecora, Prager in 1968 went to France.

So, m’god, what did he do there that, at the 1988 U.S. Open, sent the Captain of the French Team looking for him? Ah! Twenty
years earlier, this Frenchman had been the top player and coach of the Montpellier Club, and he remembered playing Marty’s Club and Marty himself—in a barn.

Never mind—one has to start anew somewhere. By 1972-74, Marty says he’d helped hundreds of kids enjoy the Sport, had built up a Club team in a suburb of Nice that in the beginning was not in a class with a thousand others but which would eventually become the #3 League team in France and which would advance, annually, at least one of his pupils to a position on either the Junior or Senior National Team. No other American Coach before or since ever made such a contribution, he says, or continued to make such a contribution, for a number of his players went on to become coaches and were able to make a living in the Sport.

But why, thought Marty, continue to develop Internationals for France? Why not try to do the same for the U.S.? Though even as he returned, it was clear that he was no longer going to be in sunny Nice with his La Trinitie Team where the successor he’d trained would produce, among others, Christophe Legout, and where Table Tennis was subsidized.

In 1974, when Jack Howard was telling me that Prager “was the most knowledgeable person in U.S. Table Tennis,” one of the Sport’s great benefactors, Joe Newgarden, decided Marty would manage his Miami Club, “Newgy’s.” It was the “finest commercial club I’d ever seen,” said aficionado Bard Brenner who’d later win the first State Bank of Miami Open Championship Doubles with Marty, even while race riots were erupting almost outside their door.

Marty spent most of those Newgy days running tournaments and coaching locals, two of whom won U.S. Closed Class A Championships—Jerry Thrasher (in 1976) and Joe’s own daughter Nancy (in 1978). Occasionally something really special would occur—like when Newgy’s hosted the National Taiwan Team in a friendly Match.

In those years, Marty was still playing in tournaments—and, indeed, my most memorable match with him came in 1980, in the U.S. Closed Over 40 Doubles. Howie Grossman and I were playing Marty and Marv Leff—with Rufford Harrison as Umpire. We were playing under the short-lived “Boggan Point-Penalty Rule,” so-called because it seemed that Scott, Eric, and I had been too exclamatory during play, and it had gotten to the point where umpires, having to make a judgment call, didn’t know whether to penalize a player for calling out or not. (Was a sotto voce “Damn!” worse than a moderately loud exhortation to “Hit the ball?”)

So when at 18-all in the 5th, Marty, on missing a return, grunted an “Oh!” Harrison penalized him a point, made our lead not 19-18 but 20-18. Naturally we all protested this call, but Rufford held firm. What a downer—Harrison was just absurd. So, looking directly at Rufford, I said loudly, distinctly, “...[Scurrilous] you!” Of course my aim was to return the absurdity, dramatically redress the penalty, have a point taken away from us. Harrison flashed a look back at me and said, “You’re defaulted!” “Oh, Rufford,” I said and went in search of the Referee. When I told him the story, he got us a new umpire, and reinstated the score to 19-18...Some fun, huh?

In the 1980’s, Marty, who’d been working with the physically challenged in France, began coaching Terese Terranova, a very competitive athlete in various sports before she’d been paralyzed in a bad car accident. From not knowing how to hold a paddle she soon became very good, so good that, as Caron Leff tells us in a Profile of Terese, she began to think that she might have a chance to win the 1987 World Wheelchair Championship in Brisbane, Australia. With the help and encouragement of her close friend,
Marty's CSCCA coaching continued to be impressive. He and Terese took 12 kids to the 2002 Jr. Olympics and between them they won 6 gold, 12 silver, and 7 bronze medals. At the 2005 Jr. National's/Jr. Olympics, 6 of their pupils—Keith Alban, Josh Bernstein, Kai and Brian Lam among the Boys, and Diana Li and Amy Huang among the Girls, brought home 13 golds as well as half a dozen silver or bronze medals. Further, at this recent Closed, Amy, in particular, distinguished herself.

So Marty and Terese are still going strong. "The old man and the gimp," they laughingly call themselves. Meanwhile, they take a cue from their longtime prize pupil, Keith Alban, today with Ben Johnson the leading adult player in their Club. Oh, yes, Keith had quit—the first time for a day. Then he'd reconsidered; "Life is too boring without table tennis," he'd said.

An axiom, Ladies and Gentlemen, we can all relate to—and one that brings me to our Hall's latest inductee, a man for whom life in his 70's is never boring...Marvin "Marty" Prager.

The second of Marty's happiest coaching experiences. Terese has just won the Gold at the Paralympics. She is on the podium having just received her medal while the Star Spangled Banner is played and the American flag is raised in the first place position! (Seoul, Korea, 1988)
Learning the Drop Shot

By Richard McAfee, USATT Certified National Coach

The ability to make a short return off your opponent’s short serve or drop shot is often the key to being able to control and win a point. This stroke looks deceptively simple but in reality it takes a lot of skill and practice to master.

Basis Principles Involved

Timing – Contact the ball as it is rising.

Type of Contact – At first touch the ball as if you were trying to just stop it. As your hand skills develop, try to add some of your own spin by making “friction” contact with the ball.

Contact Point on the Ball

• Against short backspin serve – As the ball is on the rise, you will want to touch the ball around its center, using a slightly downward motion.

• Against short backspin sidespin serve – you will need to still touch around the center of the ball but move your contact point towards the side where the spin is coming from and use a downward and slightly sideways stroke to stop your opponent’s spin.

Footwork

For right-handed players, most drop shots are played, both backhand and forehand, by stepping in with the right foot. The exception to this is when your opponent’s ball is short and wide to your backhand. In this case, you step in with the left leg down the side of the table. You will want to get as close to the ball as possible, keeping the elbow bent. This will help you control your return. The more you extend your arm, the lower your level of control.

Suggested Two-Person Drills

Touch the Line – This drill helps develop the concept of taking the ball early, as well as helping to develop good footwork and rhythm for the drop shot. Using only half of the table, you and your drill partner stand to the sides of the table in a ready position. One player steps in, using proper footwork, and touches the center line. He then returns immediately into the proper ready position and distance from the table. As soon as he/she touches the line, the other player begins to move forward and make the stroke. The players continue to alternate touching the line and recovering. The recovery is very important as you do not want to be caught over the table if your opponent attacks your return. You should recover back into the ready position before your partner touches the center-line.

Touch the Ball – This is basically the same drill as above but this time place a ball on the center line. Each player now steps in and tries to just barely touch the ball. The two players try to keep the ball as close to the center-line as possible. This drill helps develop the light touch and ball control necessary for playing drop shots.

Serve, Drop and Re-Drop

One player serves short and then both players exchange drop shots. You can start using only the forehand or backhand and gradually use the whole table.

Players drilling using one half of table.”

Many times a match is won by the player who can win the battle of the short game and get the opportunity to attack first and control the points. Make sure to add this important stroke to your daily practice and watch your match results improve.

In Memoriam: Norman Harold Schless (1927 - Dec. 9, 2005)

Don't particularly enjoy writing obituaries because each one means another friend is gone ... but I guess someone has to do it.

Norm Schless, 78, of Highlands Park, Illinois, died on Dec. 9, just a few days shy of the 2005 Nationals in Las Vegas.

Norm was one of the original members of Chicago’s famous Net & Paddle Club. His greatest claim to table tennis fame was winning the U.S. Open Esquire Championships in 1978 and 1980. He was also ranked as high as #20 in the U.S. in men’s singles. Former Net & Paddle members still remember the many double-in-the-fifth battles he had with his habitual doubles partner, Frank Tharaldson, as well as his epic duels with Len Schaitke, Dick Ichkoff, Abbott Nelson and Keith Porter.

I went to his funeral and spoke with his brother, Erwin, himself a U.S. Open Boys’ Semifinalist in 1951, who told me that Norm wanted to be buried with a couple of “custom made” paddles, a few balls, and a copy of Tim Boggan’s History of U.S. Table Tennis, Vol. III.

Norm leaves his wife of 21 years, Fern, his son Lewis, daughter Eileen, and three stepchildren, Lauren (Martin) Geller, Stuart and Gayle Schor, as well as grandchildren Jennifer, Jon, Harrison, Logan, Mason and Marin.
USA Tournament Results

November Davidson Open
Davidson, MI • Nov. 19, 2005
Open: 1st Scott Endict; 2nd Avant Amin; 3rd Ivan Popov;
U2250: 1st Scott Endict; 2nd Ivan Popov; 3rd Avant Amin; 4th Danny Duklin;
U2100: 1st Danny Duklin; 2nd William Thompson.
U1950: 1st Jim Barton; 2nd Jonathan Serman.
U1750: 1st Jonathan Serman; 2nd Teymour Sepahbodie.
U1650: 1st Teymour Sepahbodie; 2nd Tom Ulich.
U1550: 1st Teymour Sepahbodie; 2nd Joe Maher.
U1450: 1st Jeff Tomsha; 2nd Daniel McFarland.
U1350: 1st Brian Bernatowicz; 2nd Daniel McFarland.
U1200: 1st Brian Bernatowicz; 2nd Nicola Work.
U3600 Doubles: 1st Teymour Sepahbodie/Jim Barton.

December Davidson Open
Davidson, MI • Dec. 10, 2005
Open: 1st Ivan Popov; 2nd Tesi Iloh; 3rd Mark Merritt.
U2250: 1st Ivan Popov; 2nd Tesi Iloh; 3rd Bence Toth.
U2100: 1st Tesi Iloh; 2nd Ivan Popov; 3rd Teymour Sepahbodie.
U1950: 1st Hicham Chami; 2nd Jim Barton.
U1850: 1st Hicham Chami; 2nd Teymour Sepahbodie.
U1750: 1st Teymour Sepahbodie; 2nd Mark Cornish.
U1550: 1st Teymour Sepahbodie; 2nd Joseph Helfano.
U1350: 1st Nicola Work; 2nd Kokila Mummourthy.
U1200: 1st Mel Rodriguez; 2nd Nicola Work.
U3600 Doubles: 1st Danny Duklin/Don Hinshaw; 2nd Mark Merritt/Jamahl Makled.

South Bend Giant RR
South Bend, IN • Jan. 7-8, 2006
Open: 1st A.J. Brewer; 7-1 (5-4); 2nd Joe Cochran; 7-1 (4-5); 3rd Dan Seemiller Jr.; 4th Carl Estrada Jr.
Class C: 1st Adil Dhanani; 9-0; 2nd Alan Wilson; 7-2.
Class D: 1st Jeff Smart; 8-1; 2nd Chris Sharp; 7-2.
Class E: 1st Frank Matlon; 6-3; 2nd Bob McDowell; 6-3.

Schuamburg Fall Open
Schuamburg, IL • Nov. 19, 2005
Class 1: 1st Lukasz Fita; 2nd Janusz Franczek; 3rd Wojciech Wolski.
Class 2: 1st Oluwole Ayangade; 2nd Rafael Bardo; 3rd Tomasz Jablonski.
Class 3: 1st Adil Dhanani; 2nd Andrei Menharb.
Class 5: 1st Victor Xie; 2nd Tony Wang.
Class 6: 1st Janusz Olecliny; 2nd John Stuckey.
Class 7: 1st Ryan Browne; 2nd Bill Bardczik.
Class 8: 1st Eric Arnett; 2nd Scott Pechter.

Maryland Circuit
Eldersburg, MD • Jan. 7-8, 2006
Open: 1st Julian Waters; 2nd Mark Davis.
Over 40: 1st Julian Waters; 2nd Mark Davis.
U2000: 1st Steve Hochman; 2nd Julian Waters.
U1800: 1st Ray Eminon; 2nd Grigorii Yasinov.
U1700: 1st Phil VanDusen; 2nd Yvonne Kronlage.
U1500: 1st Marty Hall; 2nd Joe Hawkins.
U1300: 1st Gary McCone; 2nd Diana Chou.
Novice/U1100: 1st Young Lee; 2nd Greg Bartos.
U3600 Doubles: 1st Julian Waters/Yvonne Kronlage; 2nd Ray Eminon/Phil VanDusen.
U2800 Doubles: 1st Greg McCone/Bill VanWright; 2nd Marty Hall/Greg Bartos.

Valley of the Sun Open
Phoenix, AZ • Dec. 3-4, 2005
Finalist Mario Lorenz, Champion Luis Houd

Open Singles: Luis Houded d. Mario Lorenz, 7,10,-9,-10,11,11; SF: Houded d. Simen Potaychuk, 5,7,-8,7,14; Lorenz d. Gia Lei, 9,9,-7,10.
Open Doubles: Simen Potaychuk/Matt Winkler d. Alex Lai/Mankit Ma, 5,7,5,5; SF: Potaychuk/Winkler d. Jerry Whelpley/Gia Lei, 6,5,7,-11,10; Lai/Fla d. Bill Kenig/John Harrington, 9,-9,5,4.
Over 60: Roger Baldner d. Volf Vaskegisser, 9,10,9,5; SF: Baldner d. Larry Smith, -6,2,7,7; Vaskegisser d. Bill Cantor, -6,5,8,9.
Over 70: Ed Wang d. Franz Schauer, 3,7,7,8; SF: Wang d. Bill Cantor, -8,8,3,9; Schauer d. Bernd Schicle, 10,8,5.
U2000: Michael Shihe d. Tom Migliaccio, 10,7,7,9; SF: Shihe d. Morris Leichter, -9,10,9,7,11; Migliaccio d. Dammin Wu, 9,7,11,3,9,5.
U1900: Brian Annest d. Michael Shihe, 9,9,9.
U1750: Yong Dan Wei d. Jay Turberville, 8,4,10,6,8.
U1600: Petre Bagard d. Mike St. Louis, 5,9,5,9,9,8.
U1550: Mike St. Louis d. Eyen-Ul Haq, 8,7,4,7.
U1000: Sanjay Srinivasan d. Donna Lu, 1,9,8,9,4,8,6.
U3600 Doubles: Jerry Whelpley/Gia Lei d. Dammin Wu/Robert Trudell, 10,10,8,9.
U1700 Championship Series Winner: Max Lai.

DFW Winter RR
Irving, TX • Nov. 19, 2005
Class A: 1st Courtney Roberts; 2nd Petri Heimonen; 3rd Chian Pang.
Class B: 1st Tim Yardy; 2nd John Staley.
Class C: 1st Tom Feng; 2nd Meredith Elston.
Class D: 1st Serena Kong; 2nd Roger Quintana.
Class E: 1st Ahmad Raza; 2nd Darryl Tennyson.
Class F: 1st Connie Chew; 2nd Kevin Tsai.

Galina Cup Championships
Waltham, MA • Dec. 3, 2005
Open: 1st Larry Bavlly; 2nd Kurt Donny.
U1200: 1st Steven Hopkins; 2nd Chris Doyle.
U1700: 1st Eric Zheng; 2nd Chung Weng.
U1500: 1st Evan Coleman; 2nd Sam Rhammed.
U1200 Juniors: Saif Mohammed; 2nd Jennifer Weng.

Broward Winter Open
Davie, FL • Jan. 8, 2006
Open: 1st Keith Alban; 2nd Dayanand Maharaj; 3-4; Paul David, Ben Johnson.
U2200: 1st Bin Hai Chua; 2nd Cathy McLeod; 3-4; Patrick Anders, Carl Estrada Jr.
U2075: 1st Osviel Garcia; 2nd Dwight Newton; 3-4; Carl Estrada Jr., Wesley Greaves.
U1950: 1st Roman Gahur; 2nd Garth Jordan.
U1825: 1st Victor J. Lorandi; 2nd Kibena, Veiko.
U1700: 1st Wayne Powell; 2nd Joel Christo.
U1575: 1st Orlando Ferrer; 2nd Newly Mills.
U1450: 1st Bert Serrano; 2nd Wayne Haye.
U1325: 1st Matthew Christo; 2nd Caleb Ferro.
U1200: 1st Ian Weinstein; 2nd Michael Krause.
Sponsor: Newgy.

Pensacola Winter Open
Pensacola, FL • Dec. 3, 2005
Open: 1st Bob Bowlandier; 2nd Willy Leparulo; 3rd Billy Carlisle.
Open Doubles: 1st Willy Leparulo/Milorad Stojanovic; 2nd Ron Peters/Stan Stephens.
Division A: 1st Erik Stenberg; 2nd Johnny Billy.
Division B: 1st L.A. Johnstone; 2nd Logan Rademiller.
Division C: 1st Mike Reff; 2nd Ralph Pressley.
Division D: 1st Daniel Miesler; 2nd Pedro Veliz.

Sunburst Florida Open #6
Clearwater, FL • Nov. 19, 2005
Championships: 1st Yasmely Vadillo ($250); 2nd Werner Stollmeier ($125); 3rd Eddie Roofe ($50); 4th Alex Aponte ($25).
Master: 1st Matt Queen; 2nd Felix Gonzalez; 3rd Ted Ostrowski; 4th Jermaine Bennett.
Advanced: 1st Tim O’Neill; 2nd Margo Lindsay; 3rd Nash Williams; 4th Hank Tiedeberg.

Corrections
In the last issue, in the Arkansas Open
results on page 69, the Under 1500 event was left out. The winner was Paul Liu, with Charlie Brooks second.
USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE • March/April 2006

Volkswagen ITTF Pro Tour Grand Finals
Fuzhou, CHN • Dec. 9-11, 2005 • By Larry Hodges

USA's Gao Jun teamed up with Shen Yanfei of Spain to win Women's Doubles and become the first USA player to win an event at a Pro Tour Grand Finals. Gao also made the quarterfinals of Women's Singles.

Gao and Shen have styles that seem to go together – the two also won at the 2005 Chinese Taipai Pro Tour. Gao is a righty-pips-out penholder with great ball control, while Shen is a lefty shakehand with short pips on the forehand, inverted on the backhand.

Their biggest win here was over Guo Yue/Guo Yan of China, ranked #2 and #3 in the world. Gao is world #11; Shen is #30. They defeated the Chinese duo in the quarterfinals, 8,5,9,-4,12.

In the semifinals they defeated the Singapore team of Sun Bei/Wang Yue Gu (world #32 & 25), 8,-9,5,9,9.

In the final, they defeated Korea's defensive specialists Kim Kyung Ah/Kim Bok Rae (world #64 & 75), 9,9,8,3. Gao and Shen won by focusing on long, steady topspin shots and sudden putaways.

About their teaming up, Gao said, “I didn’t have a partner for the TMS Chinese Taipei Open [in June, 2005] and I knew Shen needed a partner, so I called the national coach back home and they had no objection to me partnering with her. I think one reason that we’ve done so well is that Shen is different from most other players. She spins the ball from the backhand and hits very flat with little spin from the forehead. This causes our opponents great problems.”

The Men’s Singles final was all-European for the first time since 1996. This was helped by the absence of most of China’s stars. This was because, according to ITTF rules, to qualify for singles, a player must play that year either six Pro Tours total or three Pro Tours in three different continents. To qualify for doubles, a team must play in at least four Pro Tours. The only player from China who qualified for singles, was Ma Long, world #19 in men and China #8. However, several Chinese players were given wild card spots: world #1 Zhang Yining in four Pro Tours. The only player from China who qualified (men or women) was Ma Long, world #19 in men and China #8. However, several Chinese players were given wild card spots: world #1 Zhang Yining in four Pro Tours. The only player from China who qualified (men or women) was Ma Long, world #19 in men and China #8.

Women's Doubles – Final: Guo Yue/Guo Yan (CHN), 6,7,-8,3, Guo d. Chen Qing (CHN), 6,-9,9,-10,4. Guo d. Li Nan (CHN), 8,9,9,8,4.

Women's Singles – Final: Timo Boll (GER) d. Jean-Michel Saive (BEL), 6,8,9,9,5. Saive d. Adrian Crisan (ROU), 5,6,6,6. Oh d. Ryu Seung Min (MOR), 7,7,4,6,8; Saive d. Oh Sang Eun (KOR), 11,-11,-6,9,7,3. Saive d. Adrian Crisan (ROU), 5,6,6,6.

Men's Doubles – Final: Timo Boll (GER) d. Jean-Michel Saive (BEL), 6,8,9,9,5. Saive d. Adrian Crisan (ROU), 5,6,6,6. Oh d. Ryu Seung Min (MOR), 7,7,4,6,8; Saive d. Oh Sang Eun (KOR), 11,-11,-6,9,7,3. Saive d. Adrian Crisan (ROU), 5,6,6,6.

Women's Doubles – Final: Guo Yue/Guo Yan (CHN), 6,7,-8,3, Guo d. Chen Qing (CHN), 6,-9,9,-10,4. Guo d. Li Nan (CHN), 8,9,9,8,4.
The highest-rated league in U.S. history came down to a three-team race, as expected, between Sunnyvale Chevrolet Team Mountain View (led by Khoa Nguyen), Realtor Voltaire Benedicto Team Palo Alto (led by Barney J. Reed), and Go Table Tennis Team Oakland (led by Michael Hyatt).

In the final month of the regular season, Palo Alto played both Oakland and Mountain View at home. In their match against Oakland, Palo Alto came out on top 5-2. However, this match could have easily ended 5-2 in favor of Oakland. Jackie Lee of Palo Alto narrowly defeated Kock Lee of Oakland, Auria Malek of Palo Alto narrowly defeated Avishy Schmidt of Oakland, and the feature match of the night had Barney of Palo Alto winning deuce in the fifth over Oakland ace Michael Hyatt.

Michael had tried to shake things up when making the lineup and wanted to throw a surprise at Palo Alto. Normally, the strongest player on both teams plays the 7th match in this best of nine team format. However, Michael arranged the lineup so he would play Barney in the second match. After Palo Alto was ahead in commanding fashion, Barney said, "That was stupid to change the lineup...now we're going to win." However, if Oakland jumped off to the commanding 3-0 lead, which they were close to doing, would Barney have said that?

The two most interesting matches remaining featured Khoa Nguyen's Mountain View team. One was against the Concord trio of Freddie Gabriel, Peter Zajac, and Trevor Runyan; the other was against Palo Alto with World Team Members Barney J. Reed and Jackie Lee. Khoa is an up-and-down player and the question was: which Khoa would show up in these remaining matches? Would it be the Khoa that made the 2004 Olympic Team in singles, or the Khoa that is upset-prone? Khoa defeated Peter Zajac easily, and Peter said, "Khoa is at another level." Freddie, however, defeated Khoa quite easily, his second win over Khoa in competition this year. Young gun and junior national team member Trevor Runyan had seven match points on Khoa but Khoa came out on top, 20-18 in the fifth and final game. Mountain View won 5-4 to escape a near-upset. In Mountain View's match at Palo Alto, Khoa won both his matches over Jackie Lee and Auria Malek. The big upset was Khoa's teammate Kevin Au defeating Barney to give him his only loss of the league season. Mountain View won 5-1 and the finals were set. Mountain View finished first in the regular season with a 8-2 record and Palo Alto was second with a 7-3 record. Those two teams would clash in the finals. With a 17-1 record, Barney J. Reed was named 2005 TMS Semester Smash League MVP.

The finals were a set of two matches, one at Palo Alto and one at Mountain View. The first match took place at Palo Alto. Auria Malek and Barney both defeated Khoa Nguyen 3-2 to lead Palo Alto to a 5-2 win. Within two weeks, Auria Malek had defeated Canada's Bence Csaba at the North American Teams Championships in Baltimore and now Khoa. Both Barney and Auria went 5-0 combined in their finals matches. The eyes of the Palo Alto club members were focused on this match.

On to Mountain View and the second leg of the finals. The Mountain View club members formed a large crowd for the final at Mountain View. Palo Alto needed three wins to be called league champions. Khoa won both his matches against Jackie Lee and Auria Malek, Tuan Anh Nguyen won a great match over Jackie Lee, but Palo Alto won three other matches and was declared league champion. The highest-rated league in U.S. history came to a close and we are happy to have heard many positive comments.

Northern California players ended up putting forth a great performance at the U.S. Nationals in Vegas the week after the league ended, with eight players making a national team and five players winning a national title. Barney, who made the U.S. Men's Team for the fifth time, said "the league helped."

To grow and keep the players, the league must increase its fan base and get more sponsors. We will start targeting the schools in the city where the league matches are and get kids and their families to come watch the matches. We will do assemblies and start numerous after-school programs. This will not only increase the spectator base and create a better atmosphere in the matches but more kids will start playing the sport. Thus this league will aim to take advantage of its high level by getting more kids into the sport. Within five years, the league would like to see hundreds of thousands of kids exposed to the sport in the San Francisco Bay Area through school assemblies and hundreds playing competitively. We hope to start kid's leagues everywhere in our area. We were able to get a meeting with the Fremont (a city of 200,000+ people) School District Superintendent and hopefully that will go well and we will discuss how best to get kids into the sport. Along with other school board members, the superintendent has expressed interest in the sport, and hopefully we can create a model for other cities to follow. If there is anyone that is interested in helping with kids programs, we will need all the help we can get.

There will be a spring league starting at the end of January or the beginning of February. We hope to have many more sponsors and all top players playing in the league that will be starting tentatively in August 2006. I am always open to others' ideas so feel free to email me at shashin1@yahoo.com. Visit our website at www.norcaltabletennis.com!
THE OFFICIAL RUBBER OF THE US SPIN CREW
2005 USA Nationals
Las Vegas, NV • Dec. 14-17, 2005

Intro to the 2005 USA Nationals
By Larry Hodges

All participation records were blown away as 873 players entered this year’s Nationals, almost a hundred more than any past Nationals. And this didn’t include another 139 players playing in the U.S. Paralympics Championships that were held in conjunction with these Nationals, for a total of 1012 players. The last time there were this many players in a U.S. tournament was in 1990, when the U.S. Open, World Veteran Championships and an International Junior Championship were held together in Baltimore.

As in the past, players got to play (57 Nationals and 27 Paralympic events), watch (did you see point seven of game four in the Men’s Singles Final between Lupulescu and Hazinski? Wow!) shop (seven table tennis equipment vendors) and perhaps find other activities in Las Vegas.

Special thanks goes to sponsors Martin-Kilpatrick/Butterfly (tables and barriers), Paddle Palace/Nittaku (balls), and the Las Vegas Convention Center. Thanks also goes to raffle donors California Table Tennis, Double Fish, Martin-Kilpatrick, Paddle Palace, Table Tennis International, Table Tennis Pioneers, and Zero Pong.

And, of course, a big thank you goes to the people who put it all together! Thanks goes to North American Table Tennis for their professional running of the event; to the volunteers staff for all their work; to the referees and umpires who resolved problems and enforced the rules; and, of course, to USATT and their staff. Without these people, we’d be a mob of 1012 players wandering about in confusion.

Men’s and Women’s Singles Format: The top four players were seeded to the Final Twelve. The rest played single elimination to the quarterfinals. Those eight players would then join the seeded players in the Final Twelve. The Final Twelve would then be split in two groups of six, with the top two advancing to the semifinals. Those who finished below the top two played crossovers for final placement. The top four finishers make the National team, plus an unfunded fifth spot.

Nationals – Women’s Singles
By Larry Hodges

The top four seeds – Jasna Reed, Tawny Banh, Lily Yip and Jackie Lee – were seeded to the Final Twelve. The rest played single elimination to the quarterfinals to decide the other eight.

Gao Jun (not attending due to the Pro Tour Finals, where she was winning women’s doubles while making the quarters of singles) automatically qualified for the team due to her world #11 ranking. This meant that there were only three funded spots left, plus the unfunded fifth spot. And, of course, the big prize – the Women’s Singles title.

Rounds One and Two
The first two rounds were uneventful, with the higher-rated player winning every match. In round one, Gina Dole, rated 1865, pushed Laura Xiao (2071) to seven games before losing deuce in the seventh, 10-6, 12-6, 7-12. Only one match in either round (Yang vs. Shih in round two – see below) went six games.

Eight matches (round two), with the winners advancing to the Final Twelve:
• Huang Yao Xi d. Barbara Wei, 3,4,7,5
• Judy Hugh d. Wendy Eav, 3,3,9,3
• Diane Chen d. Amanda Dubina, 3,5,7,7
• Nan Li d. Katherine Wu, 8,4,8,9
• Simone Yang d. Stephanie Shih, 7,7,8,7,6,7
• Heather Wang d. Laura Xiao, 6,7,5,11,9
• Michelle Do d. Atha Fong, 12,4,11,7
• Whitney Ping d. Charlene Liu, 9,1,8,10,2

Final Twelve
Group One: Jasna Reed won her first four matches and clinched first place by beating lefty pips-out penholder Huang Yao Xi (8,10,9,7,6,8). In her final match, from up 2-0, she lost to Jackie Lee (-7,11,11,9,8,10), but she finished 4-1, as did Huang, and so Jasna advanced in first, Huang second. Jackie finished 3-2 for third, with a 4-0 loss to Judy Hugh that kept her out of a three-way tie with Jasna and Huang. (But she would have still come in third in the games tie-breaker.) Judy and Simone Yang both finished 3-2; however, since Simone defaulted to Jasna, Judy came in fourth, Simone fifth. (In deciding the order of finishing in a round robin, you get two points for a win, one point for a loss, and zero points for a loss where you default.) Michelle Do (0-5) came in sixth.

Group Two: Tawny Banh, with her quick forehand loop and even quicker pips-out backhand hitting, went 5-0, but it wasn’t “easy” 5-0. She came back from down 1-3 against two-winged looping Whitney Ping (3,11,8,9,7,2,4), and after leading 3-0, had a tight match with Nan Li (8,6,9,7,9,9). Coming in second was Nan at 4-1. The key match was her heroic comeback from down 0-3 against Lily Yip in the match that decided who’d finish second (-5,7,7,12,4,9,6). Lily thereby finished third at 3-2, with Whitney fourth at 2-3, Diane Chen fifth at 1-4, and Heather Wang sixth at 0-5.

Champion Jasna Reed

Photo by Kingston Gee ©2005
Semifinals
Jasna Reed vs. Nan Li

Jasna said she was the most nervous player in the arena before the match. “She has a good table tennis coach [Stefan Feth], she’s a smart player, and she comes from a table tennis family,” she said of Nan. “She has nothing to lose, so she can play free.” As it turned out, her fears were groundless. Nan is a shakehander with medium-long pips on the backhand. She’s probably better against more one-winged players (like pips-out penholder Lily Yip, who she came back from down 0-3 to advance to the semifinals). Against the very strong two-winged Jasna, she had nowhere to go, while Jasna seemed unafraid to go anywhere. It was an easy win for Jasna, 6-3, 5-2. “I got good advice from John Bosika, and also from Tawny’s brother, Tin Banh. I was afraid I’d be too tired to play, I’d played so many matches.”

Tawny Banh vs. Crystal Huang

These two are regular practice partners and good friends, and even warmed up together. “We know each other’s game so well,” Crystal said. “Today she didn’t play very well.” Crystal is a lefty pips-out penholder who plays a reverse penhold backhand looping game (with inverted). In the rallies, she would often force Tawny to block as she spun backhand after backhand, without backing up much. Tawny played right up to the table with her quick looping forehand and pips-out backhand. Ironically, Tawny helped Crystal get her citizenship in November so she would be eligible to play in the Nationals here in December.

Tawny started strong, winning the first two. In the third, down 0-6 and then 1-9, she pulled to 9-10, then pushed Crystal’s serve into the net. Crystal won game four to tie things up. Tawny won game five, Crystal game six. Game seven was all Crystal – 3-0, 8-1, 11-3. Match to Crystal, -10,-8,9,7,-8,6,3.

Final: Jasna Reed vs. Crystal Huang

These two had played in the Final Twelve Round Robin, with Jasna winning a close 4-2 match. “This match was ugly compared to last time.” Jasna would say of the final. But to spectators, the points were often breathtaking, especially when they’d get into one of their frequent counter-smashing duels, often forehand to forehand.

In both the first and second games, Jasna took a 5-3 lead, and then lost five in a row. In the first, she won four in a row and went on to lead 10-9 and win 12-10. In the second, she wasn’t able to do so, losing 11-8. In the third, down 6-9, Jasna scored five in a row to win. In the fourth, at 8-all, she wins two in a row, loses one on an edge, then Crystal hits a backhand off as Jasna wins 11-9 to go up 3-1 in games.

At this point the tactics seem set. Jasna is pushing nearly all of Crystal’s serves back deep, and then (usually backhand) punching Crystal’s opening shot. As the match goes on, Crystal begins to challenge Jasna by serving long, and Jasna usually still pushes. Several times Jasna even gets caught pushing off deep topspin serves to the forehand, popping them up — but Crystal misses a few of these, and Jasna counters others.

Jasna is following her serves with attacks, and when she doesn’t push the serve, is flipping effectively. But Crystal keeps coming at her with her reverse penhold backhand (which has more topspin than most realize) and her pips-out forehand smashes. On her serve, Crystal is nearly always the aggressor early in the rally.

Games five and six are all Crystal’s (7 & 3) as she dominates from both wings. At 6-9, Jasna apparently gets an edge and is awarded the point (7-9), but she says it hit the side, and so the score goes to 6-10.
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And so the championship will be decided in the seventh game. At the switch, Crystal is up 5-4, but Jasna scores the next three. Crystal wins the next point when Jasna's backhand ticks the net and goes off (7-6), and Jasna calls one of the best time-outs ever. She would score the next four in a row, the first two on misses by Crystal, the last two on backhand attacks. And so Jasna wins her second USA Women’s Singles title, 10-8, 9-7, 7-3, 6.

Asked afterwards about her tactics, Jasna said, “I had no tactics whatsoever this time,” although she did agree that she was looking to push most serves back to get into the point. As to the play itself, she said, “I was so tired. I was lucky I had those two games I lost badly to rest for the seventh game.”

### Third Place Playoff

**Tawny Banh vs. Nan Li**

The are four spots on the USA National Team (plus a fifth unfunded spot). However, according to ITTF rules, due to her world ranking (#11 in the world), one spot automatically goes to Gao Jun. So there are only three funded spots available—meaning the match for third is for that spot. Tawny has been on the National Team for many years; Nan was hoping to make it for the first time.

Both play shakehands with inverted forehands, pips-out backhands. However, Nan’s pips are medium long. On the forehand, Tawny is the more aggressive, looping all-out, while Nan plays more steady, and smashes more. Tactically, Nan is moving Tawny all over the court, with Tawny often attacking all-out with the forehand. Many points started with Tawny forehand looping from the backhand, Nan blocking wide to the forehand, and Tawny stretching to forehand loop again as Nan ran her about.

Tawny won the first easily at 3, and led 11-10 and 12-11 in the second, but couldn’t convert as Nan tied things up, 15-13. They split the next four games to go into the seventh. Nan went up 5-3 at the switch, and dominated the rest of the game, 7-3, 11-5. Match to Nan Li, 13-9, 7-3.

“It’s awesome!” Nan said of making the USA National Women’s Team for the first time. She’d been on the USA Junior team years before, but had quit table tennis during college (finance major, now analyzing credit risks for a company), only starting up seriously in June of 2005, just before the U.S. Open.

### Women’s Crossover Playoffs

| 5-8 | Judy Hugh d. Lily Yip, 12-5, 8-4, 3-8. Jackie Lee d. Whitney Ping, 8-7, 6-8, 7-6, 11. |
| 5-6 | Jackie Lee d. Judy Hugh, 9,6,11, 8-11. |
| 7-8 | Whitney Ping d. Lily Yip, 8-10, 9-6. |
| 9-12 | Simone Yang, Heather Wang, Diane Chen, Michelle Do (all no shows). |

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*Recommended Capacity. Balls Recycle.
The top four seeds – Ilija Lupulesku, Cheng Yinghua, David Zhuang, and Mark Hazinski – were seeded to the Final Twelve. The rest played single elimination to the quarters to decide the other eight.

**Round One**

Only one match went the distance this round. Down 0-2, Lim Ming Chui came back to win against Li Qifan, -15,-10,8,7,5.

**Round Two**

Round Two featured one 19-gamer and one minor upset, and the two were the same. Samson Dubina, down 0-2 and 2-3, won in seven against Misha Kazantsev, -11,-8,5,4,-8,7,4. The higher rated player won the other 15 matches.

**Round Three**

This was the “BIG” round, with the winners to advance to the quarterfinals and thereby into the Final Twelve. Three of the eight matches were closely contested and two went seven.

Down 0-3 to Peter Zajac, Shao Yu, with his all-out pips-out hitting backhand and looping forehand, won in seven to advance, -10,-7,-7,4,8,4. Down 0-2 to Lu Guo Hui, Adam Hugh won the next four and advanced, -10,-9,9,6,8,6.

Up 2-0 against Jiachen David Wang, Freddie Gabriel had to go seven before advancing, 9,7,-10,-9,3,-9,8.

In other matches:
- Han Xiao d. Shashin Shodhan, 7,5,10,6
- Darko Rop d. Ashu Jain, 0,8,6,3
- Eric Owens d. Samson Dubina, 7,7,13,9
- Barney J. Reed d. De Tran, -11,7,7,2,4
- Chi-Sun Chui d. Sean C. Lee, 10,10,5,4

So the Final Twelve is set:

**Group One**: Ilija Lupulesku, Mark Hazinski, Han Xiao, Eric Owens, Barney J. Reed, Chi-Sun Chui.

**Group Two**: David Zhuang, Cheng Yinghua, Adam Hugh, Freddie Gabriel, Shao Yu, Darko Rop.

**Final Twelve**

**Group One**: Top-seeded Ilija Lupulesku did a clinic in lefty topspinning as he dominated the group, losing only two games in his five matches, both to Mark Hazinski (6,6,-8,7,-7,5).

Two players advanced, and the battle for second was the group’s story. Mark, Han Xiao and Barney J. Reed all finished 3-2, with Mark beating Barney (4-1), Barney beating Han (4-2), and Han beating Mark (4-3, with two net-loop winners at 9-6 in the seventh to end it). Among the three of them, Mark was 7-5, Han 6-7 and Barney 5-6, so Mark advanced in second. Han’s 6-7 (402) edged out Barney’s 5-6 (455) and so finished third, Barney fourth. In fifth was Eric Owens (1-4), and sixth was Chi-Sun Chui (0-5).

**Group Two**: This group also featured a three-way tie, and this time it was for the top three spots. David defeated Adam in a tight 10,6,-11,7,7,10 battle. Defending National Champion Cheng Yinghua won easily against David Zhuang, 4,8,5,-6,12, with the last game the key. However, in a repeat of his loss to him two years ago, Cheng lost to Adam Hugh, -6,6,7,4,4,7. All three were undefeated against the other three players, and so all were 4-1.

In games, Cheng was 6-5; Adam 6-6; and David 5-6, and so Cheng advanced in first, Adam second, and four-time Men’s Singles Champion David Zhuang (hobbling a bit with a knee injury) finished third.

Darko Rop, Freddie Gabriel and Shao Yu all finished 1-4, with Darko beating Shao, Shao beating Freddie, and Freddie beating Darko. When it went to games, Darko came in fourth (7-5), Freddie fifth (6-7), and Shao sixth (5-6).

Darko Rop was a near-spoiler, battling with all three of the top finishers before losing 4-2 to both David (5,9,10,19,4,6) and Cheng (-8,-8,4,10,6,7), and deuce in the seventh (5,9,9,-8,9,-11,10) to Adam. Freddie was another almost-spoiler, down 2-3 but leading 10-7 in the sixth against Cheng before losing 13-11.

**Men’s Singles – Semifinals**

Ilija Lupulesku vs. Adam Hugh

Lupi continued his topspin clinic, winning easily at 7,7,4,7. There were many great points, but scoring points against Lupi is one of the more difficult things to do in table tennis. If Adam attacked, Lupi counterlooped. If Adam attacked very strongly, Lupi would topspin back softly, and eventually either Adam would miss or Lupi would...
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Double-High Tension sponge adds an extra Ultima dimension, giving explosive rotation and speed. Sponge 2.0, 2.5, Reg $29.95. Item RJSCTE SPEED 9.5/SPIN 7.7/ CONTROL 7.9/ POWER 8.7

JUIC Scramble 21 Ultima
JUIC's Ultima sponge is combined with the Scramble 21 topsheet. Increases exponentially the bouncing rate of the rubber as well as the ball feeling at impact. Sponge 2.0, 2.5, Reg $29.95. Item RJSCTU SPEED 9.4/SPIN 7.4/ CONTROL 7.7/ POWER 8.4

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Juic Ecolo Effect
Players' Favorite Glue!!!
Great for speed and power in re-gluing. Note: Due to federal regulations, this product must be sent by ground shipment. Also available in 60ml tube. Price $5.95. Item: GJECL 1 Liter refill can Item: GJEC 1 Liter refill can with brush Item: GJECL 250 ml can with brush Item: GJEC

Juic Open Handle Case
So simple and convenient! This case covers and protects just the rubber on your paddle and the handle stays free. Zips two-thirds around the paddle head. Loop on side. Black with blue accent. Item: C11

Juic Joy Bag
This backpack is great! High quality fabric and construction. Best of all, the zipped pockets provide all the organizational space you need to keep your life Joy-ful! Zipped pocket at top fits CO player with conveniently placed hole for headset wire. Two side zip pockets w/inner compartments for water bottles, rubber cleaner, etc. Plus small zip pocket on back for wallet, balls or other items. Lower region padded for extra back comfort. Padded, adjustable carrying straps. A great buy! Two styles: Black w/white zippers and Red w/blue trim. Black w/white: Item: AJB Red w/blue: Item: AJR

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- SPEED 9.6 / SPIN 8.7 / CONTROL 7.0 / POWER 9.4

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**NARUCROSS TENSION**

The same technology: CROSS [Crosslink Synergy System] as the NARUCROSS, with its crosslink synergy in both sponge and rubber sheet, producing great resilience. The new bonding system between sponge and top-sheet guarantees superior fresh glue effect. You get the combination of resilient top-sheet, but with even faster reaction and greater feeling of ball control. Sponge: 1.3,1.6,2.0, 2.2. Reg $39.95. Item: RNNAT

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- SPEED 9.4 / SPIN 9.0 / CONTROL 7.0 / POWER 9.4

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Includes blade + 2 sheets rubber from TIBHAR, JOOLA, NITTAKU, JUC, STIGA, YASAKA, or STAG. Save up to $50! *Extra charge for some rubbers*

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2005 European Champion Vladimir Samsonov uses Tibhar blades and rubber

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counterloop all-out. When Lupi attacked (and he always knew just when to do so), he almost always won the point. Many points would start off with Adam making a series of great shots, but end with him making a seemingly careless mistake—but the "mistakes" were usually the result of the constant varying spin and placement by Lupi.

Mark Hazinski vs. Cheng Yinghua

As with the first semifinals, this was a battle between a young "upstart" and a veteran. The difference was that Mark has been training and competing in leagues in Europe for 18 months (first in Germany, in Sweden the past three months), and has blistering power, while defending champion Cheng is 47 years old and a full-time coach, not player.

The first four points told a story in themselves. Cheng served fit-it, and started with a fast serve to Mark’s forehand, catching him for a winner. Cheng followed with a medium” serve that Mark tried to backhand loop, but the ball went shorter than he expected and so he missed it. Then it was Mark’s turn to serve, and he served & ripped a forehand winner, then served and ripped a backhand winner. Experience (and craftiness?) versus raw power.

Mark led 9-7 in the first, but Cheng won four in a row to win 11-9. However, Mark would outscore him 33-12 in the next three games as he won them at 3,6,3. When Cheng attacked, his shots were just too powerful and consistent. When Cheng attacked, he simply didn’t have the power to consistently get through Mark, and he often found himself counterlooping with Mark, with Mark’s power giving him the big edge.

Tactically, Cheng is flipping Mark’s short serves to Mark’s backhand and trying to follow with a forehand. He is somewhat successful in making the first forehand shot, but often is unable to finish the point. Mark has no such problem (usually ripping winners to the middle), and seems unafraid of Cheng’s attack. Cheng is often the aggressor at the start of the rally, but too often they end up in a rally where Mark dominates. When Mark is the aggressor early in the rally, there rarely is a rally. Both are mostly serving short and looking for balls to loop.

In the fifth, Cheng’s attack, often to Mark’s middle, is more effective as Mark has more trouble counterlooping them. Cheng goes up 10-8, but Mark serve & rips, and rips another against Cheng’s block to reach deuce. Cheng serve & loops into the net, and Mark has a passing-of-the-torch match point. The last point is a nice one, with Mark ripping, and Cheng off the table fishing, and he finally chops one back—but it floats long, and the match is Mark’s, 9,3,6,3,10.

Mark’s coach in the match, Mark Nordby, said afterwards of the main tactics, “Attack his middle, and mix up the receives with light flips, drop shots, and heavy pushes to the corners. Then go for shots.”

Men’s Final

Ilija Lupulesku vs. Mark Hazinski

There are probably two players in the draw with serious chances to upset Lupi. One is David Zhuang, who defeated him last year in the semifinals, but didn’t advance to the semifinals due to finishing third in a three-way tie (with Cheng and Adam). The other is Mark. Mark is a threat because of his sheer power, and because he’s been playing in Europe for 18 months, and so is somewhat familiar with such a ferocious topspin game as Lupi’s. In each game, unlike most others, you could see that Mark was in there against Lupi, that Lupi was being pushed to the limit—and yet, he couldn’t quite make the breakthrough needed to win. Two games were close, and another was close until near the end.

As Lupi was set to serve in the first game, someone right next to the table took a flash photo right in the face of the lefty Lupi, who stepped back to complain, rubbing his eyes. The photographer (not one of the official ones) was warned as the crowd booted him, and play began again.
7th Garden State Open
USATT 4 Star - May 20-21, 2006
Princeton University - Dillon Gym - Princeton, New Jersey
Organized by Lily Yip Sports Inc - Asian American Cultural Heritage - Princeton Univ. TTC

TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE:
Lily Yip, Steve Wallitt, John Son, Bei Wang

REFEREE: Patrick Collins, IU

EQUIPMENT: 25 Double Fish Official 45th World Championship Tables, Nets & 3 star 40mm orange balls.

ENTRY DEADLINE: Entries must be received by May 7, 2006. Late entries will be charged $10. Entries may be rejected if space does not permit.

All Entries Must Include Payment.
All USATT laws and regulations apply.

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ELIGIBILITY: All players must be USATT members or members of an ITTF affiliated association except for events 2, 18 & 19. Bring your membership card or receipt. Non-members MUST join USATT at the university. USATT membership: $40/yr, $100/3yr for adults; $20 for juniors, $60/yr for household (2 adults + minors).

Adult players who have never been USATT members may purchase a One-Time Tournament Pass for $10. Junior players must be under the event age in their selected junior event as of the tournament date. Senior players must be 45, 60 by December 31, 2006. Players ratings will be based on the March/April 2006 issue of the USATT magazine.

The tournament committee reserves the right of acceptance or refusal of all tournament entries.

DIRECTIONS: Dillon Gym is a 5-minute walk from the Princeton train station (you have to get off at Princeton Junction and take the shuttle train to Princeton). For those driving, you can enter the University from Faculty Road via Elm Drive. At the parking booth you will be directed to an appropriate place to park. Dillon Gym is located further up on the left side of Elm Drive after a double curve. An alternate parking location would be University Place. Please check the University map at http://www.princeton.edu/map for more details.

INFORMATION: Contact: Lily Yip at Tel. 732-748-9712, Email atlanta96@msn.com Website: www.doublefish-us.com
Send entries and payment to: Lily Yip Sports Inc., 14 Dock Watch Hollow Road, Warren, NJ 07059

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The National Junior & Cadet Team Trials were held at the USA Nationals - and here are the USA Teams!

Special thanks goes to Table Tennis Pioneers/Stiga, the National Teams Uniform Sponsor.

(Pictures were taken during the Trials, and so the players did not yet have their Stiga uniforms.)

USA Junior Girls' National Team
- Judy Hugh
- Anna Fong
- Stephanie Shih
- Barbara Wei

USA Cadet Girls' National Team
- Olena Sowers
- Ariel Haing
- Amy Huang
- Alicia Wei

USA Junior Boys' National Team
- Adam Hughes
- John Leach
- Trevor Runyan
- Misha Kazantsev

USA Cadet Boys' National Team
- Justin Yeo
- Amarsh Sahu
- A.J. Brewer
- Joseph Wang

Photos by Kingston Gee © 2005 except for Huang, A.Wei & B.Wei by Gerry Chua ©2005
In game one, after falling 5-6 behind, Mark led 9-7. At this point, it looked like Mark had a chance to dominate as he had in the semifinals as his power was taking its toll on Lupi. However, Lupi simply played superb in winning four in a row. Lupi continued his sudden dominance in game two, where he lost the first two points and still won 11-5.

In game three, it was back to even. Starting in this game, the rallies seemed to reach a new level. The counterlooping was absolutely incredible. Both can seemingly counterloop anything. Mark has the edge in power, but Lupi’s more consistent, never missing, and his topspin is jumping all over the table. Halfway through it was close, and then Lupi went up 7-4, then 7-5. From there on, it was all Lupi again as he won 11-6 to lead 3-0.

Mark wasn’t giving up, and he took a 4-0 lead in the fourth. At 4-2 they had the point of the match, maybe a nominee for point of the year. It was an all-out counterlooping point that seemingly went on forever (and this was no exhibition point). Sometimes both ripped and counterripped over and over, other times one would fish the ball back as the other ripped. Twice the ball hit the net and dribbled over. Each time the ball was returned, and the counterlooping continued. Mark finally missed, and his lead was down to 4-3. At 6-6, Lupi scored three in a row as Mark made three “unforced” errors in a row—although unforced errors against Lupi are rarely truly unforced. They then had another counterlooping “point of the match,” almost as good as the earlier one, with Mark winning this time by ripping a backhand counterloop from off the table. Lupi goes up 10-8, then 10-9 when Mark rips a winner to the wide forehand. But Lupi loops one that Mark blocks off, and Lupi has won, 9, 5, 6, 9.

Lupi’s obviously playing better than he did last year. Like Mark, Lupi has been playing in the German league, where there are plenty of power players like Mark.

Tactically, Lupi said, “In the beginning I like to feel out an opponent, move the ball around and see what he does. I think I played better tactically in the earlier match against Mark, even though he won two games. He simply played even better that time. Against me he has to be in very good shape, physically and mentally. I mostly returned his serve short, and mostly served short with varied spins, with some deep serves mixed in. He played my wide forehand a lot, so I began to be ready for it. He knows my left knee was injured recently, and so was making me use it.”

He also had words about the tournament. “The organization was very good. I like Las Vegas. This is my third win in four years, so I’m very happy.”

Third Through Sixth

There was no crossover match for third place as Cheng Yinghua had already said he wouldn’t be able to play on the team, and so he defaulted to Adam Hugh. This meant that the playoff match between Barney J. Reed and Han Xiao for fifth place would be for the fourth spot on the team. Han had beaten Darko Rop 4-0 in the crossovers, while Barney had received a default from David Zhuang, who didn’t show for the match due to injury.

It was a counterlooping battle. Han had the edge on the first loop, being quicker off the bounce and quicker to attack first. However, Barney had the edge as the rally continued. The match was decided by the key points at the end of each game—and Barney won them all.

Han led 10-9 and 11-10 in the first, led 10-8 in the second, and led 10-9 in the third—and lost all three games, and the last 9. So Barney secured the fourth spot on the team (11, 10, 11, 9).

Since Han would be #5 on the team, he would be unfunded and wouldn’t play much. So he decided to skip it this time and focus on doing well in school this semester, which would allow him to do more training later on. Darko Rop, who is next in line, will be going as the #5 player.

Men’s Crossover Playoffs

5-8: Barney J. Reed d. David Zhuang, def.; Han Xiao d. Darko Rop, 11, 7, 8, 9.
5-6: Barney J. Reed d. Han Xiao, 10, 10, 11, 9.
7-8: Darko Rop d. David Zhuang, def.
9-12: Freddie Gabriel d. Chi-Sun Chui, def.; Shao Yu d. Eric Owens, def.
9-10: Shao Yu d. Freddie Gabriel, 9, 8, 7, 4, 4, 13.
11-12: Chi-Sun Chui & Eric Owens (no shows).


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11-12: Chi-Sun Chui & Eric Owens (no shows).

Men’s, Women’s & Mixed Doubles

By Larry Hodges

Men’s Doubles

Defending Champions Iliaj Lupulesku/Mark Hazinski dominated the event, losing only one game in the final (5-9, 3-11) against the surprise finalists Nison Aronov/De Tran, who had upset fourth-seeded Freddie Gabriel/Peter Zajac in the quarterfinals, 6-11, 12, 11. Aronov/Tran is a surprisingly good team, as both are very steady loopers. Both teams in the final were lefty/right combos, with Lupi and Tran the lefties. Lupi & Mark defeated Adam Hugh/Han Xiao in the semifinals, 4, 8, 8.

In the semifinals, second-seeded David Zhuang/Eric Owens didn’t show for the match against Aronov/Tran in the semifinals due to a knee injury to David. Lupulesku/Hazinski defeated Adam Hugh/Han Xiao, 4, 8, 8. Owens/ Zhuang had a close call in the quarters. After leading 2-0, they found themselves in the fifth against Loc Ngo/John Tran in the eightths, but pulled it out, 8, 8, -8, -8, 5.

Women’s Doubles

The top two seeded teams played the final. Jasna Reed/Tawny Banh vs. Huang Yao Xi/Whitney Ping. Each team had a free-swinging, all-inverted looper – Jasna and Whitney. Each team had a pips-out player – Tawny Banh, with her quick-off-the-bounce pips-out shakehand backhand and her nearly as quick forehand loop (inverted), and lefty pips-out penholder Huang Yao Xi, with her inverted reverse penhold backhand.

In the first, Reed/Banh led 10-9, but Huang/Ping pulled it out, 13-11. In the second, Huang/Ping led 7-3, then it was 7-6, 9-6, 9-8, 11-8, and they took a 2-0 lead in this best of five. In the third, Reed/Banh led 8-4, and then it was 8-all. Huang/Ping were up match and championship point at 11-10 and 12-11, but couldn’t convert. Down 12-13, they have the point of the match, with Huang and Whitney off the table fishing and lobbing over and over before winning the point, but they would lose the game 16-14. (The “official” score was put down as 15-13, contrary to my point-by-point notes.) In the fourth, Reed/Banh romped, 11-4, and from leading 2-0 in games, up 8-4 in the third, and having two championship points, it was now into the fifth and final game.

Reed/Banh took a quick 2-0 lead in the fifth, and then led 4-3. Six points later, it was 4-9 as Huang/Ping ran off six in a row in winning the match, 11, 8-14,-4, 7.

Said Huang after the match, “We played steady with good placement. Whitney can loop, I control the ball, and when she has a chance she ends the point.” She said it was the first time they had played together.

Mixed Doubles

It wasn’t until they were up 2-0 in the final (best of five) that the mother/son team of Lily Yip/Adam Hugh lost their first game in the event (with some help from a default in the semi from Shao Yu/Stephanie Shih, after winning their first two matches 3-0). Seeded second, they played the top-seeded team of Huang Yao Xi/Mark Hazinski in the final, and except for a blip in the third game, dominated the match, winning 7, 9-8, 5. Huang and Hazinski had defeated Cheng Yinghua/Barbara Wei in the semifinals. The third and fourth seeded teams both lost in the quarters. Cheng/Wei upset #3 seeded Eric Owens/Tawny Banh, 6-9, 2, 10 while Shao Yu/Stephanie Shih upset #4 Freddie Gabriel/Jackie Lee, 8, 2, 11.

College Team Trials

By Larry Hodges

College Women’s Team Trials

Whitney Ping dominated the event, losing only one game in the round robin of five women, to Amanda Dubina (1-10, 10, 10, 7, 8). In the “final,” Jackie Lee defaulted to Whitney, as the two had agreed that their final in Under 22 Women the day before would count for both finals. Final standings, with top four making the team: 1st Whitney Ping, 4-0; 2nd Jackie Lee, 3-1; 3rd Katherine Wu, 2-2; 4th Amanda Dubina, 1-3; 5th Laura Leach, 0-4.

College Men’s Team Trials

Top seeds Adam Hugh and Han Xiao won all three of their preliminary matches 3-0 to advance to the semifinals. Both had six-game battles against the runner-ups of the other preliminary group. Han’s match with Shashin Shodhan was rather strange as five of the six games were landslides. Shashin won two games at 8 and 3, but Han won the other four at 3, 4, 2. Adam’s match with Pan Lin was more “normal,” with all but the first game closely battled. Adam often seemed on the defensive, lobbing over and over. Toward the end he became more offensive, and it paid off. Adam and Han asked if they could split the final, but were told that unless one defaulted to the other, they would have to play – and neither wanted to be the one to default. So they played. Style-wise, Adam’s ball control is stronger, while Han’s over-the-table attack (especially with his backhand loop) is stronger. (Both are shakehand inverted players with strong two-winged looping attacks.) Adam won the first three, Han won the next two, then Adam pulled away to win the fifth. Final standings: 1st Adam Hugh; 2nd Han Xiao; 3-4: Pan Lin, Shashin Shodhan.

Under 22

By Larry Hodges

Under 22 Men

Mark Hazinski romped to the final of Under 22 Men by scores of 7, 11, 4, 4, 7, 10, 4, 7. Adam Hugh had a few bumps along the way, losing a game in the quarters to Kristopher Sabas (4, 5, 8, 7). and to Misha Kazantsev in the semis. Misha won game one, 11-9, but Adam came back, winning the match at -9, -10, 7, 8. In the final, it went the full distance, with Mark winning, 8, 3, 9, 3, 6.

Under 22 Women

Second-seeded Whitney Ping had no problems reaching the final of Under 22 Women without losing a game. Not so for top-seeded Jackie Lee, who found herself down 0-2 in the quarters to Barbara Wei before pulling it out, 8- 9, 8, 7, 7. In the semis, she defeated Stephanie Shih, 8, 2, 8, while Jackie defeated Judy Hugh, 7, 7, 6. In the final, Whitney’s attack dominated against Jackie, 5, 6, 9, 9. “I’ve been training in Palo Alto with Dennis Davis’ junior program,” Whitney said. “The training partners are very good. Having Mark Nordby coach me in the final was a big help.” The match would count double – the two had agreed in advance that the match would also count for the Collegiate Women’s Trials final, which meant that Whitney came in first on the Collegiate Teams, Jackie second.

Wheelchair action at the U.S. Paralympics, held in conjunction with the USA Nationals. 139 players from 26 countries participated in 27 events. See feature next issue!
Under 2000 Hardbat

In the 21-entry Under 2000 Hardbat event, I don't think you can say Marty Reisman coming out of Pre-lim round robin play scored an 18-3 upset over a higher rated Al Papp. But Mike Charney, a 275-point underdog, did do in Pete May who brazenly winged it to the world that "Sponge is the ‘junk rubber.’" Charney also defeated Tim Wright, who’d won the Under 1500’s Hardbat from John Curd. But then Mike, as well as last year’s finalist Allen McDermott, went down in straight games to James Rautis, while Reisman got by former Champions Ralph Stadelman and Scott Gordon. In the final, Marty, on losing the 1st at 19 to James, as last year’s finalist Allen McDermott, went down in straight games to James Rautis, while Reisman got by former Champions Ralph Stadelman and Scott Gordon. In the final, Marty, on losing the 1st at 19 to James, who was playing with Friendship 563, said, “This isn’t the Game.” and lost the 2nd under 10. Though James’s rubber was on the officially recognized list of rubbers put out by Hardbat President Scott Gordon, I don’t know if it’ll continue to be, for Marty said, as if addressing the Hardbat Committee, “I’d been misled [presumably by his friend Scott] as to the efficacy of this racket.”

Over 40 Hardbat Singles

The top half of the 26-entry Over 40 Hardbat saw Loc Ngo advance over Reisman and others to reach the semi’s without dropping a game. His opponent would be decided after a furious match between doubles partners Tim Kelly and Ray Mack. Tim had been taking lessons from Wong Man Hua, reportedly a former Chinese Team member for 14 years, Coach to Ma Lin, and Head Coach of the Hong Kong Team from 1995-2002. Ray, his own coach and proud of it, had made the discovery that if he moved three feet back from the table he could counter with his hard bat. The ratings of the two were almost identical, and apparently accurate, for Ray said he ended their match dramatically—ran way wide to his forehand, made a desperate hurtful-ofticket swing, and the ball went in for a 19-in-the 3rd winner. Ray then had a much easier time in the semi’s with Loc who, playing passively, kept looking at his new rubber and shaking his head.

In the bottom half of the draw, Lim Ming Chui and Steve Berger arrived unchallenged to vie for a place in the finals. Ming, willing to be patient, rolled, dropped, looked to pick a kill—won the 1st at 19. Then, says Ming, when he was up 17-13 in the 2nd, he felt a sharp pain in his elbow, and, unwilling to risk serious injury, in effect stopped playing, for he never got another point that game and was beaten 21-10 in the 3rd.

Last year, defensive-minded Steve beat Ray 13, 12 in this event. This year he felt he ought to change his game—but only against Ray, ought to become an attacking player. No problem—he wins in straight games. “Maybe you didn’t know,” says Steve, “but even 30 years ago, when I was 20, I was an aggressive player hiding in a defensive player’s body.” Hey, o.k. with me, I don’t pray.

Fifty years ago, Steve beat Lily Yip, Loc Ngo, and Ty Hoff to win the U.S. Closed Hardbat Open. But the Certificate he’d received read “Hardbat R. 1st”—which suggested he’d just won a section of the Preliminaries. When Steve mentioned this in passing to Sarah McAftee, Sarah said, “That’s easy to fix,” and brought him a new Certificate of his choice.

Hardbat Doubles

After Ken Grady/Mike Wingfield pulled off a startling 1,000-point upset in their 18 in the 3rd Hardbat Doubles opener against John Harrington/Bernie Savitz, they apparently went off to celebrate, or to collapse, or maybe do both, for they allowed Ashu Jain/Dave Rosenzweig free passage to the final. There the #1 seeds met Mack and Kelly who’d dropped a 21-11 opening game to Hermann Luechinger/Papp and then were down 10-4 in the 3rd to Reisman/Berger. The final was not won by the 400-point favorites. This 1 attribute (1) to Ashu saying he hadn’t played a serious match in 3 years, and (2) to the fact that Ashu’s enjoiner to Dave, “Let’s get serious” came just a mite late, when they were down 9-1 in the 5th. Still, even with Tim’s continuing affirmations to Ray (“C’mon, we can do this!”), Ashu and Dave almost caught them.

So, whew, that was close—Ray says he can have a good time at these tournaments so long as he stays away from self-loathing. Ballroom dancing he mixes in with his table tennis, but after playing 14 matches in one day, and cramping, he’ll be hobbling a while, not smoothly gliding.

Hardbat Open

Reisman, the 75-year-old icon, stretching himself into body-building and aerobics, into being touted by International Career Management for both his new book and the proposed movie version, was ready in the Hardbat Open to take advantage of whatever came his way. Though he’d started a deep 3rd in his preliminary round robin, no one in the original 9-group, 33-entry event would play more matches than he. A seasonal gift he got when for whatever reason Defending Champion Courtney Roberts decided not to play. Then on to single elimination with victories over Philip Lim and graphics artist Dean Johnson who’s putting together a valuable photo/story portfolio of Marty’s career.

In the only 8th’s match scheduled (scheduled as Reisman’s opponent Chui said, for 12-45, played at 2:45 because they couldn’t find Marty), Ming, necessarily playing with rubber on the approved list, Reisman rubber he called it, said he wasn’t used to it and couldn’t generate any power. He lost to Marty, 2-1.

Next up for Reisman: Dave Rosenzweig, rated 450 points above Marty. But on this particular day 63 years of experience counted more. Next up: Rudy Miranda, rated 350 points above Marty. In this 3-0 match, Reisman said, his game came together, he found his touch, relived the way he played decades ago. That brought him to the final against Lily Yip, the new millennium’s dominating hardbat player who’d straight-game beaten Ray Mack, then Steve Berger, after Steve had survived a marathon match with Loc Ngo (“Steve’s much improved,” said Loc). Now what came Marty’s way—with the score 2-0, Lily, in the 1st—was an umpire. “Go away,” said Marty. “We don’t need you.” Lily, 2717 (that’s hardbat ratings), didn’t care, was willing to play without another in the court—she wasn’t worried about being taken advantage of, Marty hadn’t even scored a point. The umpire insisted. Up went Marty’s serve—“Fault!” Beautiful—just what this watched final needed. Officiousness. Drama. Cast of three. The charges and counter-charges. Marty’s serve wasn’t vertical enough. Wow, would this umpire be in the chair come Men’s finals night—then I’d bet he’d see serves, lots of them, that weren’t vertical.

Naturally Marty called for another umpire—either before, or after, or both before and after, he told the guy, “you and your yellow card!” And walked away—his fans urging him not to default. “This umpire’s prejudiced against me,” Reisman told the Referee—“I want another one.” The Ref said there was no reason to replace him. “Marty said, “You weren’t here to see what happened!” “Two minutes to default!” said the Ref. “Default the both of us!” said Reisman, and Lily laughed. Marty called it quits, said later, “The court’s not a forum for an umpire’s performance.”

Or is it?
Senior Events
By Tim Boggan

Over 30 Singles

With 3 of the top 4 seeds, Eric Owens, Lily Yip, and Chi-Sun Chui, defaulting in quest of National Team Trial wins, the top half of the 60-entry 30’s draw saw De Tran reach the semi’s by outlasting John Thach Tran 11-9 in the 5th. Loc Ngo advanced to the companion semi’s, first, by 9, 7, 16 battling by Avishy Schmidt who, when someone said, “Don’t you usually beat Loc?” replied, “Hey, it’s Vegas! Loc blocks, I spin. But it’s very hard to spin here in Vegas.”

Sung Yang, Loc’s next opponent, was a -9, 7, 8, -12, -9 winner over Brian Brescove who himself had been a 12-10 in the 5th survivor over Panno Dok. When Yang lost the 2nd at 1 to go down 2-0 to Loc, it appeared he wasn’t going to be in the match, but then he gave himself a chance at 12-all in the 3rd, failed chance, to change the momentum.

In the semi’s, De 5, 9, 9 overpowered Loc whose heavy-glued blocks sounded like they came from a frying pan. Up 8-7 in the 2nd, Loc’s doin’ o.k., bringing back ball after ball with his soft control play, but then he makes a cosily mis-serve, whereupon De serves and follows with a winner, serves and follows with a winner, goes up 10-8. Loc serves, De swings for a winner, whiffs; Loc serves and De loops in a winner. Such is the modern game? In the 3rd, it’s 9-all, De’s serve. Close your eyes—can you guess the pattern of play? De serves, follows with a winner; De serves, follows with a winner. Match to the aggressor. Loc says he’s busy coaching, didn’t have time to train. Uh, train for this match?

On the other side of the draw, Barry Dattel reached the semi’s, first, by rallying aggressively from 2-0 down to Tung Phan, then eliminating former Heliangjong province professional Diane Dongye Chen whom one might remember from the 2004 Closed. After emigrating from China and spending maybe 20 years in the States, Diane decided last year, since her children were 8 and 9, that she’d like to play a bit again. And play she did—almost well enough to edge out both Barry Dattel and Lily Yip, with Cheng “Chen” Yinghua. Those herculean 11 points were scored by John Thach Tran after he’d nervously ousted Santos Shih 17-15 in the 4th. The other seed in the first half of the draw was Avishy Schmidt who, up 2-0 and 10-6 over Richard Hicks, looked to have the winning hand, but, not too smart, made a bad bet as it were, went for a quick winner, and, as the cards turned, Dick made the telltale adjustment on his receive of service, won this big 12-10 swing game. Then, flipping his new Dr. Neubauer long pips, got his timing back, and went on to break Avishy 8 and 5.

In the other half of the draw, Barry Dattel, after losing an 11-13 game to Mas Hashimoto, made his unpimped way to the semi’s. He downed Rudy Miranda who’d 8 in the 5th spotted t.t. video Gary Ruderman’s return (his hiatus going back a dozen or more years), then stopped Ramin Samari who’d 7, 11, 8, 10 knocked out the ever age-defying George Brathwaite. The Chief was ahead 1-0 and 10-9 when Samari got a lucky succession of net balls to win the match-turning 2nd game.

Advancing to meet Dattel was Tuan Le, big-game conqueror of Dave Sakai, 4, 10, 10, 8 and Rey Domingo, 12-10 in the 4th. Rey, who works at Holy Name Hospital in Teaneck, N.J. as an OR instrument technician, has been absent from the Game for two years because of a needed knee operation, and may have been caught unaware by the new serve rule that gave him an umpire problem or two.

Barry couldn’t reprise his last year’s role as finalist to “Chen,” for he lost to Tuan Le in 5 after drawing a yellow card for saying “Jesus Christ!” Then I’d heard that on his way to losing the 4th and 5th games he’d ripped the number off his back. The umpire, as if understanding Dattel didn’t want to be identified, seemed to agree he shouldn’t have worn it to begin with, and so didn’t card him for that.

No, Chen was not coaching and playing because, he said, coaching requires concentration and energy.

Over 40 Women’s Singles

You start this 40’s draw (Bye) with Defending Champion Cheng “Chen” Yinghua, and...2, 2, 4; 7, 4; 3, 6; 5, 11; 5, 3, 7; 5, 3, 5 points later...you (Bye-Bye) end it with Cheng “Chen” Yinghua. Those herculean 11 points were scored by Brian Brescove who, up 2-0 and 10-6 over Richard Hicks, looked to have the winning hand, but, not too smart, made a bad bet as it were, went for a quick winner, and, as the cards turned, Dick made the telltale adjustment on his receive of service, won this big 12-10 swing game. Then, flipping his new Dr. Neubauer long pips, got his timing back, and went on to break Avishy 8 and 5.

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No, Chen was not coaching and playing because, he said, coaching requires concentration and energy.
Ray's serves and took him in the 5th. Ray was bothered by Changping's heavy underspin and, echoing Schmidt, felt he was spinning unsuccessfully.

On the other side of the draw, Lim Ming Chui had too much for Steve Varela, Morris Jackson (winner in 5 over Yang Sung), and Gary Fraiman—but Ming then fell in the semi's to his 58-year-old former practice partner Jiri Hlava. Jiri had been too 4-game good for Nick Mintsiveris and Dave Sakai, after Dave had stopped former Iranian National Hamid Hayat in 5. Jiri said Dave "had improved in speed and steady control, but had been too passive in the decisive moments" (ergo, Hlava had taken the steady control, but had been too passive in the decisive moments)報之他 had taken the first two games 12-10 from Sakai who didn't bother by Changping's heavy underspin and, echoing Schmidt, felt he was spinning unsuccessfully.

Jiri says he returns to his native Czech Republic once a year, to Kladno where he grew up, just outside Prague. He plays games for a few bucks with the teens who spot him 4 then serve and follow till he has no chance—after which he goes off, with or without them, to drink, as he says "lots of beer."

Over 50 Women's Singles

In one of the Women's 50's R.R. group, Donna Sakai beat Danuta Andrzejewska in 5. Danuta had been a victim of Hurricane Wilma, so for a long time her apartment had no windows, and, as "Life was a little difficult," she couldn't hold to any schedule to play table tennis. Then more bad luck: seeing a pip was missing on her racket, she'd ordered new rubber, but the sheet sent her was the wrong kind, and that unfortunately Champing started on the good side and ended badly on the bad side.

Suzanna Sanders seemed to have everything going for her—at the Florida State Senior Games, she wasn't only the t.t. threat, she won medals in mid and long distance swimming. She and Bob had been traveling sonic. she won medals in mid and long distance swimming. She and Bob had been traveling sonic.

Over 50 Doubles

50 Singles Chmp Hlava also won the 50 Doubles with Chui—a not too satisfying win though, for, having received a Bye and two defas, they played all of two 57-game straight matches. Runner-up James Rautis and Meredith Elston had to work for their spoils. They stopped three good teams: Hicks/ McCoUllum (9, 9, 9); Ray Fahlstrom/Bill Ryan (in 5); and Brathwaite/Sakai (6, 12, 10). Rautis plays with a hardbat: Elston sides with Dr. Neubauer's long pips. Elston, rated only 1734, was praised for consistently keeping the ball in play and especially for setting up James's kills ("I obeyed my doubles partner and coach," he said wryly). But it was Rautis, armed with Friendship 563, who explained the effect of the Neubauer pips. "Whatever spin is given, it leaves over 90% on the ball, so that the spin coming back to the opponent is always reversed." "The Doctor is in," added Meredith—"his racket is the newest revolution in the Sport since speed glue."

Over 60 Men's Singles

On one side of the 44-entry Men's 60's, George Brathwaite, the #1 seed, went down in the 8th's to Bill Ryan. George felt he didn't topspin enough, pushed too much, which rather played to his opponent's strength, for Bill's in over the table—either pushing or blocking, flipping, as someone at a Stratosphere bar said, his "funny long pips without any rubber" and smooth sides and getting sharp angles that allow him, with what appears to be one finger up on the blade, to sweat the ball hard. Bill said his aim was to throw The Chief off his game, and that he did, acknowledging this was the best he'd played in 10-15 years.

However, Ryan could get no further than the quarter's where he docilely succumbed to Chong Kang Tay's unique style and 160-point rating advantage. Joining Tay in the semi's was Ragnar "Ray" Fahlstrom. He'd have to reach the final to win the U.S. Open. Ron Van Schimmelman who, considering he'd just had a cataract removed from his left eye and was without depth perception, went away within to balance his two-games-down start.

On both sides of the draw those advancing to the final kept pace with one another. Dick Hicks, knocking off Fahlstrom and Tay, lost but one game—to former World Over 70 Doubles Champion Lynnwood Smith; Dell Sweeens, knocking off Nick Mintsiveris and Guang-Kui Dong ("Could he really be 65?" DELL thought) lost but one game—to former 2-time U.S. Open finalist Jack Howard. Dell had been playing 40-minute sessions at home with wife Connie, a former U.S. Open Champion and multi-time U.S. Open Mixed Champion with her husband, but of course he knew, since he'd also won several U.S. Open Men's Doubles.
National - Results

Senior Events

Over 30 - Final: De Tran d. Shao Yu, -11,-10,8,4; SF: Tran d. Loc Ngo, 9,9; Shao d. Barry Dattel, 10,9,9; QF: Tran d. John Thach Tran, 5,8,-9,6; Ngo d. Sung Yang, 7,1,12; Dattel d. Diane Chen, -6,7,-7,10; Shao d. Li Qian, 8,5,4.

Over 40 Men's Singles - Final: Cheng Yinghua d. Tuan Le, 5,3,5; SF: Cheng d. Richard Hicks, 4,4; Le d. Barry Dattel, 4,-10,8,8; QF: Cheng d. John Tran, 6,5,11; Hicks d. Avishy Schmidt, 5,7,-8,4; Dattel d. Ramin Samari, 7,8,7; Le d. Rey Domingo, -10,4,3.

Mixed Doubles - Final: Hlava d. Whitney Ping, 4,2,-10.-7.-8.; SF: Hlava d. James Barton, 7,7,10,9,6.; 6th Chi-Sun Chui, 0,5.

Over 50 Men's Singles - Final: Richard Hicks d. Dell Sweevers, 5,6,5,5; SF: Hicks d. Tay Chong Keng, 12,10,6; Sweevers d. Dong Guang-Kui, 3,11,8,3; QF: Tay d. Bill Ryan, 3,4,6; Hicks d. Ragnar Fahlstrom, 9,6,4,6; Sweevers d. Mintsiveris, 6,4,3; Duan d. H. Hoa Cung, 7,4,6.

Over 40 Women's Singles - Final: Lily Yip d. Gina Dole, 9,7,7,7; SF: Yip d. Bella Livshin, 4,4,6; Dole d. Diane Dongye Chen, 8,6.


Over 60 Women's Singles - Final: Yvonne Kronlage d. Suzanna Sanders, def.; SF: Kronlage d. Danuta Andrzejewska, 9,10,7,7,12; Sanders d. Barbara Kaminsky, -11,13,0,4.

Over 70 Singles - Final: George Brathwaite d. Nick Mintsiveris, 3,8,5; SF: Brathwaite d. Wes Wolfe, 7,4,11; Mintsiveris d. Marty Reisman, 6,5,6; QF: Brathwaite d. Grady Gordon, 5,7,7; Wolfe d. Frank Susan, 7,10,-9,4; Reisman d. Mark Shapiro, 9,9,10; Mintsiveris d. Dick Peregrine, 5,1,1,7.

Over 75 Singles - Final: Grady Gordon d. Marty Reisman, 6,-11,9,13,8; SF: Gordon d. Frank Dwyer, 6,7,7; Reisman d. George Hendry, 6,8,6.

Over 80 Singles - Final: Frank Dwyer d. George Hendry, 6,11,9,11,0; SF: Dwyer d. Arthur Chase, 4,5,8; Hendry d. Ivan Slado, 12,4,5.

Over 40 Doubles - Final: Nison Aronov/De Tran d. Ramin Samari/Avishy Schmidt, 8,9,7; SF: Aronov/Tran d. Diane Chen/Ofian Li, 3,6,6; Samari/Chen d. Cheng Yinghua/Dave Sakai, -5,4,10,8.

Over 50 Doubles - Final: Lim Ming Chui/Jiri Hlava d. Meredith Ellston/Jamie Rautis, 5,9,4,9; SF: Hlava/Chui d. Donald Greene/Roland Massoth, def.; Ellston/Rautis d. George Brathwaite/Dave Sakai, 12,6,10.

Over 60 Doubles - Final: Richard Hicks/Nick Mintsiveris d. Ragnar Fahlstrom/Bill Ryan, 7,7,7; SF: Hicks/Mintsiveris d. H. Hoa Cung/Kong Chong Tay, 4,4,9; Fahlstrom/Ryan d. Pete May/Dell Sweevers, 6,8,11.

Over 70 Doubles - Final: Grady Gordon/George Hendry d. Brathwaite/Nick Mintsiveris, 6,2,-7,7,2; SF: Gordon/Hendry d. Dick Peregrine/Ivan Slade, 8,8,8; Brathwaite/Mintsiveris d. Frank Dwyer/Lynwood Smith, 4,4,8.

Over 40 Under 18 - Final: Martin Sundel d. Jim Raymond, 5,7,9; SF: Sundel d. Kenneth Tannan, 3,5,9,8; Raymond d. James Barton, 7,7,-10,9.

College, Junior & Cadet Team Trials

College Men's Singles - Final: Adam Hughes d. Sung Yang, 10,7,8,-10,5,5; SF: Hughes d. Pan Lin, 4,10,9,7,-8,8; Xiao d. Shashin Shodhan, 3,4,-8,3,2.

Men's Preliminaries

Group One: 1st Adam Hughes, 3-0 (d. Liu, 6,5,9,3; d. Poon, 2,10,6,6; d. Shodhan, 7,7,5,6); 2nd Sung Yang, 2,10,6,6; 3rd (d. Poon, 2,10,6,6; d. Shodhan, 7,7,5,6).

Group Two: 1st Liu Shao Yu, 3-0 (d. Presley, 4,6,5,3; d. Meier, 7,1,1,2; d. Lin, 4,6,7,9); 2nd Pan Lin, 2-1 (d. Meier, 2,10,10,8; d. Presley, 9,4,-9,3,7); 3rd Aldis Presley, 1-2 (d. Meier, 7,7,-9,9,6); 4th Michael Meier, 0-3.

College Women's Team Trials - Final: Final Whitney Ping, 4,0 (d. Dubina, 10,10,10,7; d. Lewis, 4,8,6,5; d. Wu, 8,6,4,5; d. Lee, def.); 2nd Jackie Lee, 3-1 (d. Dubina, 1,4,8,5; d. Wu, 9,9,10,7,9; d. Lee, 6,5,6,5); 3rd Katherine Wu, 2-2 (d. Lee, 11,9,6,1; d. Dubina, 6,9,4,8,4); 4th Amanda Dubina, 1-3 (d. Lee, 4,-8,6,6,9,2); 5th Laura Leach, 0,4.

National Junior Boys' Team Trials (top four make team): 1st Adam Hughes 2nd Leach 3rd Trevor Runyan 4th Misha Kazantsev 5th Joseph Coehran 6th Steven Chan 7th Leach 8th Eric Finkelstein 9th Alan Tan 10th Nicholas Curran 11th Victor Liang 12th Kevin Phung.

National Junior Girls' Team Trials (top four make team): 1st Judy Hughes 2nd Aths Fong 3rd Stephanie Shih 4th Barbara Wei 5th Wendy Eav 6th Jennifer Mast 7th Tiffany Qu 8th Laura Xiao 9th Stephanie Chow 10th Jessica Yick 11th Colleen Lee, Rachel Madision.


Youth Events

Under 22 Men's Singles - Final: Mark Hazinski d. Adam Hughes, 8,-3,6,3,6; SF: Hazinski d. Trevor Runyan, 4,9,7; Hugh d. Misha Kazantsev, -9,10,7,8; QF: Hazinski d. Eric Finkelstein, 4,4,7; Runyan d. Pan Lin, 4,7,9; Kazantsev d. Joseph Cochran, 14,9,-4,9,4; Hughes d. Kristopher Sabas, 5,2,6.

Under 22 Women's Singles - Final: Whitney Ping d. Jackie Lee, 6,-9,9,6,5; SF: Ping d. Stephanie Shih, 8,8,2,8; Lee d. Judy Hughes, 7,7,7; QF: Lee d. Barbara Wei, -9,8,3,7,7; Hugh d. Olena Sowers, -7,4,6,5; Shih d. Aths Fang, 6,-8,6,5,4; Ping d. Amanda Dubina, 6,5,3.

Boys' Primary School Singles (Under 13) - Final: Don James Alto d. Alex Wang, 4,9,9; SF: Alto d. A.J. Brewer, 11,-6,7,7; Wang d. Jonathan Chen, 7,-10,9,4,8; QF: Alto d. Peter Li, 9,9,4; Brewer d. Justen Yao, 8,8,6,8; Chong d. Marcus Jackson, def.; Wang d. Preston Chin, -9,13,9.

Boys' Elementary School Singles (Under 10) - Final: Feng Yijun d. Alexander Yao, -8,9,4,5,9; SF: Feng d. Anand Engineer, 9,-7,6,7; Yao d. Christian Roberts, 7,9,9; QF: Yao d. Eahn Chua, 5,3,0; Roberts d. Erick Shahnazari, 1,8,7; Feng d. Christopher Brewer, -6,5,5,4; Engineer d. Seth Pech, 8,6,5.
Girls' Primary School Singles (Under 13) - Final: Wilma Tammy Gu d. Janice Lan, 6,5,7,9; SF: Lan d. Alicia Wei, def.; DF: Gu d. Christiana Divita, 7,9,4,8; QF: Wei d. Sadie Burris, 3,4,3; Lan d. Marielle Chua, 10,5,5; Divita d. Serena Banh, 6,6,10,9; Gu d. Amy Huang, def.

Girls' Elementary School Singles (Under 10) - Final: Ariel Hsing d. Lily Zhang, 9,7,6,6; SF: Hsing d. Ellen Hwang, 4,8,5; Zhang d. Natalie Sun, 8,8,6,11.

Hardbat Events

All hardbat matches are games to 21.

Women's Singles Class 1-2: Gold: Catherine Mitton (GBR); Silver: Clara Podda (ITA); Bronze: Florence Gossiaux (FRA).

Women's Singles Class 3: Gold: Min Hsia Liao (TPE); Silver: Monique Sirgant (FRA); Bronze: Patricia Sapp (USA).

Women's Singles Class 4: Gold: Min Hsia Liao (TPE); Silver: Monique Sirgant (FRA); Bronze: Patricia Sapp (USA).

Women's Team Class 1-3: Gold: Stephanie Mariage & Fanny Bertrand (FRA); Silver: Jane Campbell & Catherine Mitton (GBR); Bronze: Marie Christine Fillon & Florence Gossiaux (FRA).

Women's Team Class 4-5: Gold: Kimie Bessho & Satoko Fujiwara (JPN); Silver: Siu Ling Chan & Yuet Wah Fung (HKG); Bronze: Shu Chin Hsiao & Min Hsia Liao (TPE).

Men's Open Wheelchair: Gold: Emeric Martin (FRA); Silver: Christophe Durand (FRA); Bronze: Kyoun Sik Choi (KOR).

Men's Open Standing: Gold: Tai Leibovitz (USA); Silver: Dragan Rakic (CRO); Bronze: Andrea Nau (GER).

Men's Singles Class 1: Gold: Walter Kilger (GER); Silver: Matti Launonen (FIN); Bronze: Bernhard Kretz (GER).

Men's Singles Class 2: Gold: Lars Juul Hansen (DEN); Silver: Damian Mennella (FRA); Bronze: Kyoung Seok Kim (KOR).

Men's Singles Class 3: Gold: Oerjan Klyevik (SWE); Silver: Young Il Jung (KOR); Bronze: Jeong Seok Kim (KOR).

Men's Singles Class 5: Gold: Zoran Krizanec (CRO); Silver: Christophe Durand (FRA); Bronze: Maxime Thomas (FRA).

Men's Singles Class 6: Gold: Simon Ikonen (SWE); Silver: Vadim Buzin (RUS); Bronze: Michael Jensen (DEN).

Men's Singles Class 7: Gold: Jochen Wollmert (GER); Silver: Norman Bass (USA); Bronze: Paul Karabardak (GRB).

Men's Singles Class 8: Gold: Christophe Rozier (FRA); Silver: Peter Frommelt (LIE); Bronze: Ting Sung Hou (TPE).

Men's Singles Class 9: Gold: Tahl Leibovitz (USA); Silver: Ronald Vrijenberg (NED); Bronze: Tonnie Heijnen (NED).

Men's Singles Class 10: Gold: Pavel Lukianov (RUS); Silver: Andreas Nau; Bronze: David Moffatt (AUS).

Men's Teams Class 1-2: Gold: Rudolf Hajek & Hans Ruep (AUT); Silver: Jan Riapos & Michal Babela (SVK); Bronze: Damien Mennella & Vincent Bouy (FRA).

Men's Teams Class 3: Gold: Nicola Moliertino & Julius Lampacher (ITA); Silver: Jeong Seok Kim & Young Il Jung (KOR); Bronze: Masaharu Fujiwara & Yukihiro Sato (JPN).

Men's Teams Class 4: Gold: Il Sang Choi & Kyoung Sik Choi (KOR); Silver: Emeric Martin & Maxime Thomas (FRA); Bronze: Ezequiel Babes & Eclido Lopes De Oliveira (BRA).

Men's Teams Class 5: Gold: Christophe Durand & Toshnikou Oka (FRA/JPN); Silver: Eun Chang Jung & Byoung Young Kim (KOR); Bronze: Oerjan Klyevik & Patrik Rognseth (SWE).
Continued from page 53

such limited preparation wasn’t enough to win him a Championship. Still, that was gonna be the extent of his effort—and, as expected, he lost the final to Hicks, -5, 6, -5, -5.

Dick’s now self-employed and, aside from the time he spends at his Indianapolis Club, is periodically called as an expert accident witness. He surveys the car crash scene, notes the skid marks, judges the speed, testifies for either side (”But she wasn’t drinking”...”But she was negligent”)—in short, he makes deductions, exercises strategies, as if he were playing a t.t. match.

Over 60 Women’s Singles

In the Women’s 60’s, only Yvonne Kronlage, the 4th seed at 1710, has trouble getting out of her round robin—incidentally goes 5 with Nevada’s 984-rated Joyce Arpon. But just about the time you think Yvonne must be brooding about the $2,000 a month she’s got to raise to keep her Maryland Club going, she finds her game against the 1833-rated but uncomfortable, coachless Danuta. At deuce in the 5th, Danuta breaks her pattern, slips to the unexpected side of her racket...no advantage—loses another killer match. Suzanna, meanwhile, takes on Kaminsky again. Barbara says she has a new, faster blade, says her old pops-out rubber is banned, so in Baltimore two weeks ago she bought something new, says, rather than watch the color of her opponent’s racket when contact is made, she watches the spin on the ball. This time Suzanna reverses her previous 50’s result, is down 2-0, then wins 3 straight. 1

Rubber is banned, so in Baltimore two weeks ago she bought something new, says, rather than watch the color of her opponent’s racket when contact is made, she watches the spin on the ball. This time Suzanna reverses her previous 50’s result, is down 2-0, then wins 3 straight. 1

This is the final to Hicks, -5, 6, -5, -5.

Over 60 Doubles

60 Singles Champ Hicks also won the 60 Doubles with Mintsiveris. But getting to the final wasn’t easy. They were 1-all and 10-all in the 3rd against Will Baird/ Mike Sturtevant, then had a 5-gameer with Tay/H. Hoa Cung. Tay, a righty penholder, plays these short, soft blocks that require a delicate touch to keep from popping them up, while Cung waits to follow with blasts from either wing. In fact, if Hicks hadn’t suddenly risen from his predictable defensive play to loop in some backhands that 5th game I think he and Nick would have gone noses.

Fahlstrom/Ryan weren’t challenged by either Howard/Boggan (5-game escapees over Al Grambo/Jerry Marcum) or Sweeris/May (5-game escapees over Neil Kuluva/Martin Sundel)—and in turn didn’t challenge Hicks/Mintsiveris. Ray couldn’t wait to get off court to tell me this was the 10th straight Championship final he’d lost. May, watched over by Jim McQueen in the persona of a benevolent Uncle Sam, was a hoot in his Christmas Elf outfit. Did you know, at 65, Pete was #1 in the World in his age group? That’s what he told me. And what’s more he showed me, though he didn’t have golf disc in hand, how with the right start-off spin he could wing it left around one Convention Hall pillar then watch it sail right around another. He trained: his specialty was a vertical object.

Over 70 Singles & Doubles

Biggest surprise in the 70 Singles was the number of entries: 44. But there were round robin upset: Dan Koscielecki over Boggan; Bob Sanders over Stan Sokol; Wes Wolfe over Ralph Muramoto; Don McDermott over Lyn Smith; and Liu Su Feng over Cung. Big bad Wolfe finished off Koscielecki (9, 12, 10) and Frank Suran (7, 10, -9, -4) before being tracked down and destroyed by “The Chief.” Runner-up Mintsiveris took care of Reisman; and Brathwaite, Mintsiveris.

Brathwaite/Mintsiveris had to win the 70 Doubles, right? Wrong. They were upset by Defending Champions Grady Gordon/George Hendry who’d had a two-game lead that onlookers thought would surely be wasted as they went into the 5th. Credit Grady with being aggressive, making the heavy favorites take tough shots. Earlier, Grady/George were 1-1 and 10-all in the 3rd with Ivan Slade/Dick Peregrine, advanced in 5 over Reisman/Dean Johnson. In a 1st-round match of note, Marvin Kano/Al Miller prevailed in 5 over Y.C. Lee/Dr. Michael Scott.

Over 75 Singles

In the 23-entry 75’s, the only real round robin upset was Charles Klotzer over Boggan who hastens to tell all his no-look admirers that his recent precipitous drop of hundreds of rating points isn’t affecting his mental health—he dines well, keeps writing. Peregrine got by Danny Kim (“His ball went in all different directions,” said Dick”), but Hendry was just too solid for him. And Reisman too good for Hendry. Frank Dwelly won a 5-game match from Ivan Slade who had such a phlegm problem that the last doctor he went to said, “Have you tried acupuncture?” Defending Champion Grady Gordon went through Dwelly...and there facing him in the final, without so much as a tip of the hat, was Reisman.

“Better not let him play with the ball, Grady—you gotta go after him.” That’s what Grady’s friend Buddy Melamed would have said. And what a 6, -11, 9, -8, 13 match they played! Who won? Who do you think with Marty up 10-7...11-10...12-11...13-12 in the 5th? No, not Marty. Though he felt his offense wasn’t working, was at “low ebb.” He was at “low ebb.”

Over 80 Singles

Some fierce matches in the 80’s, but mostly predictable results. In the preliminary round robins: Hendry (1975) over Si Wasserman (1504) in 5 games. George Hendry will then defeat Slade who came out of a round robin in which Lee Egel beat Gene Trenere, Bill Brin beat Leo, and Gene beat Bill—great fun, eh? Arthur “Buster” Chase—7, 9, 10, 5 edged out Wiley Butler, then went down to Dwelly. The final between Dwelly and Hendry was remarkable. Frank’s strategy was to play his backhand to George’s forehand and wait for an opening to attack. Though when he attacked, George usually brought the ball back, Dwelly finally won, but not before Hendry had him match point and Frank’s chance swung scored.

Hendry, 85, says he still generally plays twice a week at his St. Louis Club. Dwelly, 82, in between play in Vegas takes 2-mile walks with his daughter Lois, and they plan to go to Bremen for the World Veterans Championship. For 10 years now, Frank’s gotten along very nicely with his artificial hips. “The doctor who operated on me,” he says, “is also the doctor who operated on Jack Nicklaus. He said I was the fastest recuperating patient for a man my age he ever had.”

George, I’m sure, thought Frank’s 6, -11, -9, 10, 10 recovery here fast enough.
Holiday Classic
Allentown, PA • Jan. 15, 2006
By Art Paolini

The Allentown YMCA/YWCA and the Allentown/Lehigh Valley area Table Tennis Club held the fifth Annual Holiday Classic one Star tournament on Jan. 15, 2006. 24 teams participated in four classes, and 56 players competed in the two Top Gun singles events (from MD, NJ, PA and CT).

Moving the event a week later and an early bird discount drew considerably more players than in previous years. Most of the entries came in early and that made preparing the draws much easier than in previous years. Unfortunately, 13 teams had to be turned away due to space and time limitations.

Those who didn’t procrastinate had a great time and everyone liked the Top Gun single elimination format, with a R/R of the semifinalists in the A Division. They particularly appreciated the diversity of hot food, drinks and healthy snacks available on site.

The Allentown/Lehigh Valley area Table Tennis Club has been running tournaments continuously for over 33 years. The next event (same format) will be held on July 16, 2006. Entry deadline is July 10, 2006 or first 22 teams. Early bird discount ends on July 1, 2006 so enter early and often.

In addition to the money distributed, first and second in Class C and D received trophies. The winner of the Top Gun A Division received a two-foot trophy.

Class A Teams
1st WJ Eagles (M. Wechsler, L. Chui);
2nd Localmotive (M. Leshinsky, V. Iodkovoskiy);
3rd Bridgeport Bullies (R. DeWitt, D. Feltenberger);
4th Snake Pitt TTC (N. Wetzler, J. Wetzler);
5th Crossover #1 (J. Martin, C. Jackson, I. Dejong).

Class B Teams
1st Mental Blockers (M. Plevinsky, D. Spellman, M. Zukerman);
2nd Crossover#4 (M. Saxe, M. Trumbore);
3rd Acme TTC A. (Philips, T. Thornton);
4th Magnus Tres (F. Roth, R. Albright, D. Dickson);
5th Passiac TTC (M. Tan, M. Nakamatsu).

Class C Teams
1st GVTTC (R. Prescott, M. Friedler);
2nd Pips Ahoy (B. Colas, E. Chen);
3rd Newtown Knights (B. Dodds, P. McKernan);
4th The Russels (S. Russel, K. Russel).
5th Creative Strokes - F. Bomberger, B. Kohut;
6th The Wheatinas (E. Posner, A. Braunfield).

Class D Teams
1st Crossover#2 (M. Fryburger, D. Stadden, R. Bair);
2nd Upstaters (C. Colas, B. Schelmentzauer);
3rd Flathitters (A. Snyder, R. Yukich);
4th Wannabegood (J. Forro, D. Locke);
5th Crossover #3 (R. Horst, J. Horst, R. Barrera);
6th Coal Crackers (J. Livingston, R. Pajor);
7th Team Pyro (R. Lessen, J. Seeherman);
8th FNG’s (P. Nam, J. Ginsberg).

Top Gun Singles
Class A: 1st John Wetzler; 2nd Mike Leshinsky; 3rd Rich DeWitt; 4th Christopher Teille.
Class B: 1st Mike Zukerman; 2nd Tony Thornton; 3rd Bill Kohut.

Aurora Fall Giant Round Robin
Aurora, CO • Nov. 13, 2005
By Richard McAfee

Tournament Director and recent Hall of Fame Inductee Richard McAfee and Aurora Open Champion Yahao Zhang

Denver’s Yahao won his second straight Aurora tournament but not without several five-game struggles. Yahao (2149), who is one of the top Cadets in the country, came into the tournament with almost a 200 rating point advantage over his nearest competitor. But as often happens to the #1 seed, all the pressure was on him. Yahao had to survive three five-game matches on his way to the final. Two college students from Boulder almost proved his undoing. First, Gao Lu (unrated), who plays a beautiful chop and loop game, almost upset Yahao in the preliminary round robin group. In the semifinals of the Class A, the strong penhold blocking play of Liu Lingli (1743) had Yahao on the ropes before he escaped with an 11-7 win in the final game. Previously, in the Main Round Robin, Denver’s Slavomir Bolha (1849) also pushed Yahao to five games in the A Round Robin Group.

The final of Class A was a rematch of last year’s finalists, Yahao and Westminster’s Jiri Mracek. Last year, Jiri’s clever mix of long pip chops and strong forehand attacks had given Yahao problems. This time around, Yahao played like a young man on a mission as he easily won the title in straight games, 11-2, 11-6, 11-2.

This was the second tournament for the Aurora Club and its President, Chris Salazar, deserves a lot of credit for organizing a very successful event. This year’s event quickly filled up with the maximum of 50 players from three states, and featured prize money, large trophies, and excellent free food for all participants. The tournament ran on time throughout the day, thanks to Tournament Director, Richard McAfee. A special thank you to our sponsors: Butterflyonline.com, Costco, and Krispy Kream Donuts.

Class A: 1st Yahao Zhang; 2nd Jiri Mracek.
Class B: 1st Thakor Sanjiv; 2nd Gao Lu.
Class C: 1st Bob Leatherwood; 2nd Thadeus Briggs.
Class D: 1st Liu Viet; 2nd Trent Casi.
### TOP OLYMPIC ELIGIBLE MEN

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### Tournaments Processed

This list was compiled on 02/02/06 (ages are as of that date) and includes all tournaments received through 01/22/06. Due to space limitations, only current members who have played since 10/10/05 are included. This document may not be reproduced without prior written permission of USA Table Tennis. Copyright 2006.

### New Tournaments Included in Ratings

- **2006 FL Open Sunburst Tour**
- **Maryland Giant RR**
- **Baystate Giant RR**
- **5th Annual Holiday Classic**
- **Power Pong Open**
- **2006 Winter Broward Open**
- **South Bend Winter Open**
- **Maryland Circuit**
- **NJTTC January Open**
- **2005 Killerspin Holiday Open**
- **Framingham December Open**
- **USA Nationals**
- **Holiday Open**
- **Charlotte December Open**
- **NJTTC December RR**
- **December Open**
- **Power Pong December Open**
- **All Tree Service Open**
- **Maryland Circuit**
- **Hutchinson 2005 Fall Open**
- **Galina Cup TT Championships**
- **Pensacola FL Winter Open**
- **Central FL Fall Open 2005**

### 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. If you do not have any ratings-related questions, contact Felisa Huggins, USATT Head-Quarters, 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 719-866-4583 or by e-mail at ratings@usatt.org.
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### JUIC Maple Shot Slam Special

**FOR THE WORLD'S NUMBER 1 RANKED SPINNER!**

**NEW**

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**2005 Ranks**

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<td>Tanaka, Masato</td>
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USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE • March/April 2006

Paddle Palace Presents the
USATT Tournament Schedule

March 4 - Missouri Winter Games Open, Springfield, MO. Contact: William Lewis, 417-890-8902. epocmagic@aol.com. ★★★
March 4 - Harlingen RR & Doubles Open, Harlingen, TX. Contact: Robert Salmeron, 956-423-1752. rsalmeron@vvrr.com. ★★★
March 4 - Killerspin Presents the Arnold, Columbus, OH. Contact: Ed Hogshead, 815-965-8558. ehogshead@killerspin.com. ★★★
March 4 - 4 Path - Maryland Circuit, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne M. Kronlage, 410-489-7291. 0 Star
March 11 - Atlanta Giant RR, Atlanta, GA. Contact: Wendell Dillon, 770-923-5110. pong35@mail.com. Spring
March 11-12 - Quaker City Open & Meiklejohn Seniors, Philadelphia, PA. contact: NATT, 301-738-8250. info@nataltabletennis.com. ★★★
March 11-12 - NJTTC March RR, Westfield, NJ. Contact: David Rosezwieg, 212-245-0906. tournament@njttc.org. ★★★
March 11-12 - 4th FIT Open TT Championships, New York, NY. Contact: Lily Yip, 732-748-9712. atlanta@msn.com. March
March 17-19 - 2006 ‘Cary Cup’ Championship, Cary, NC. Contact: Mike Babuin. 919-462-3931. mbeababui@townofcary.org. ★★★
March 18 - Grand Canyon State Winter Games, Phoenix, AZ. Contact: Table Tennis & More, Inc. 602-678-1234. len@tabletennisandmore.com. Game
March 18 – 2006 Spring Open Giant RR, Indianapolins, IN. Contact: Robert Clyde, 317-791-9704. rclryce@indytabletennis.com. ★★★
March 18-19 - PA Team Tournament, State College, PA. Contact: Samuel Steiner, 814-833-8764. samuel@compuverse.com.★★★
March 25 - 10 Star Open, Atlanta, GA. Contact: Ralph Presley, 404-344-4728. rpresley@aol.com.★★★
March 29 - 2006 DFW Open, Lakeland, FL. Contact: Raymond Spann, 863-965-0760. rspann@verizon.net.★★★
April 5 - 0 Star Open, Easton, MD. Contact: Michael Spann, 410-489-7291. ★★★
April 8 - Power Pong Open, Fountain Valley, CA. Contact: Attila Malek, 714-540-5162. halboom@dslextreme.com. ★★★
April 8-9 - Maryland Circuit, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne M. Kronlage, 410-489-7291. 0 Star
April 8-9 - 2006 DFW Open, Lakeland, FL. Contact: Raymond Spann, 863-965-0760. rspann@verizon.net.★★★
April 5-6 - Central FL Spring Open 2006, Lakeland, FL. Contact: Raymond Spann, 863-965-0760. rspann@verizon.net.★★★
April 6 - 0 Star Open, Easton, MD. Contact: Michael Spann, 410-489-7291. ★★★
April 6 - 0 Star Open, Easton, MD. Contact: Michael Spann, 410-489-7291. ★★★
April 8 - 2006 DFW Open, Lakeland, FL. Contact: Raymond Spann, 863-965-0760. rspann@verizon.net.★★★
April 9-10 - Maryland Circuit, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne Kronlage, 410-489-7291. 0 Star
April 13-14 - NJTTC May Teams, Westfield, NJ. Contact: David Rosenzwieg, 212-245-0906. tournament@njttc.org. ★★★
April 12-13 - NJTTC May Teams, Westfield, NJ. Contact: David Rosenzwieg, 212-245-0906. tournament@njttc.org. ★★★
April 13-14 - NJTTC May Teams, Westfield, NJ. Contact: David Rosenzwieg, 212-245-0906. tournament@njttc.org. ★★★
April 20 - 0 Star Open, Easton, MD. Contact: Michael Spann, 410-489-7291. ★★★
April 20 - 0 Star Open, Easton, MD. Contact: Michael Spann, 410-489-7291. ★★★
April 22-23 - NJTTC April Open, Westfield, NJ. Contact: Larry Babvy, 908-654-9009. tournament@njttc.org. ★★★
April 22-23 - Indiana Closed, Indianapolis, IN. Contact: Robert Clyde, 317-875-8394. racyld@indytabletennis.com. 0 Star
April 22-23 - Arizona Closed, Phoenix, AZ. Contact: Wayne Johnson, 480-755-9976. wjohnson62@cox.net. 0 Star
April 23 - 0 Star Open, Mesa, AZ. Contact: Samuel Steiner, 814-833-8704. samstein@compuverse.com. ★★★
April 28-29 - ITTAA League Singles, Sherwood, AR. Contact: Eugene A. Atha, 501-835-5291. catha@swbell.net. 0 Star
April 29 - 0 Star Open, Dothan, AL. Contact: Keith Peterman, 334-791-9637. keith@wttc.com. ★★★
April 29 - 0 Star Open, Dothan, AL. Contact: Jon Bosika, 815-489-6813. ★★★
April 29-30 - Northern Kentucky Spring Open RR, Team, Highland Heights, KY. Contact: Greg Thompson, 859-781-5050. gtnotes@hotmail.com. ★★★
April 30 - 0 Star Open, Brooklyn, NY. Contact: Brooklyn TT School/Club, 718-421-2200. esue1972@yahoo.com. ★★★
April 30 - 0 Star Open, Brooklyn, NY. Contact: Brooklyn TT School/Club, 718-421-2200. esue1972@yahoo.com. ★★★
April 5-6 - Central FL Spring Open 2006, Lakeland, FL. Contact: Raymond Spann, 863-965-0760. rspann@verizon.net.★★★
May 27 - May Open, Davison, MI. Contact: Jon Bosika, 810-658-8153. ★★★
May 27-28 - Golden State Open, Walnut Creek, CA. Contact: Philip Schaefer, 925-689-7463. philiekic@hotmail.com. ★★★
May 27-28 - VA State Championships, Newport News, VA. Contact: Newport News Table Tennis Club, 757-675-8677. admin@nttc.com. 0 Star
May 27-29 - Killerspin Mohegan Sun Open, Uncasville, CT. Contact: Ed Hogshead, 815-965-8505. edhogs@aol.com.★★★
May 29 - 0 Star Open, Dothan, AL. Contact: Keith Peterman, 334-791-9637. keith@wttc.com. ★★★
May 29 - 0 Star Open, Dothan, AL. Contact: Jon Bosika, 815-489-6813. ★★★
June 1 - 0 Star Open, Dothan, AL. Contact: Keith Peterman, 334-791-9637. keith@wttc.com. ★★★
June 1 - 0 Star Open, Dothan, AL. Contact: Jon Bosika, 815-489-6813. ★★★
June 1-10 - Maryland Circuit, Eldersburg, MD. Contact: Yvonne Kronlage, 410-489-7291. 0 Star
June 17-18 - New Jersey Open, Piscataway, NJ. Contact: NATT, 301-738-8250. info@nataltabletennis.com. ★★★
June 24 - 0 Star Open, Easton, MD. Contact: Michael Spann, 410-489-7291. 0 Star
June 24-25 - California State Open, Santa Monica, CA. Contact: Ichiro Hashimoto, 818-700-0948. ichiro.hashimoto@csun.edu.★★★
July 28-30 - 2006 AUU Junior Olympics, Hampton Roads, VA. Contact: North American Table Tennis, 301-738-8250. info@nataltabletennis.com.★★★
August 5-6 - Eastern Open, Piscataway, NJ. Contact: North American Table Tennis, 301-738-8250. info@nataltabletennis.com.★★★
First Family of U.S. Table Tennis:

Adam & Judy Hugh, Lily Yip and Barry Dattel

For the First Family in table tennis first not only because collectively they play more table tennis than probably any other family, but also because individually they come in first in table tennis matches most of the time - friendships made are as important as matches played. I had a chance to talk with most of the Yip/Dattel/Hughes family - Yip is Lily's last name and in China it's the custom for women to keep their family name, Hughes is from Lily's previous marriage, and Dattel is stepdad Barry's last name. Adam is currently a first-quarter freshman at Princeton University and was in the middle of finals when this interview took place, so Barry filled in for Adam.

What led to your outstanding performance at the recent Nationals?

Judy: Probably more practice and game playing. You have to play games to have the mentality. I play with Barry. I play more games with him, more drilling with mom I used to prefer playing games over drilling, but now I see that drill practice really makes a difference. When I don't practice for a couple of days or a week, when I pick up the racket it takes a while to get the touch back.

Barry: Judy has this ability to come from behind in tournament matches. She probably did it 10 times last year. She's not rattled by being behind. She's focused on the next point.

Lily: I won Mixed Doubles with Adam. We've finished second before, but this was the first time we won. I'm so happy that I won with Adam.

Barry: And this might be the first time a mother/son team has won a mixed doubles championship. Three years ago I played with Judy and Lily played with Adam. It seems like a popular event now, with 32 teams this past year. Judy and I lost in a close four games to the team Adam and Lily beat in the finals.

I don't consider my performance at the Nationals outstanding. I tried my best, but players beat me. I've won over 30 singles and over 40 singles at least once before. Semis aren't as good as winning, but I'm not unhappy with my performance.

Would you list your major table tennis titles in addition to Nationals?

Barry: Adam is the North American champ. He's won every age category starting at age 11. He hasn't won anything on the international scene, but I believe he came in around 3rd in the world junior challenge championships. [Breaking news: Adam was just named USATT Male Player of the Year for 2005. -The Editor]

Judy: #1 under 18 years in '04, #1 under 16 girls in '03. 6th at the '03 world cadet challenge.

Lily: Top 16 women's singles in China, 2-time women's Guangdong Province champ, selected to Chinese youth team for three months. 2-time Olympian '92 and '96 for the USA. #1 in tryouts in '92 and '96. Wei Wang and I got to top 16 women's doubles in the '96 Olympics. Gold medal women's doubles in the '91 Pan American games. #1 last five years in Open Hardbat.

Barry: Over 40 national champ, Over 30 national champ, New Jersey state champ twice in singles and doubles many times. Over 40 Senior Doubles champ with Lily.

Are you surprised at how well Adam and Judy are doing?

Lily: I'm not surprised. They have better conditions than most of the kids. They're very athletic. Adam started when he was 10. They have it in their genes. They should be #1.

How did you keep them interested when they were growing up?

Lily: I tried not to push them too much. I let them know how lucky I was to play table tennis. That's one of the reasons I play, too. They see I'm happy when I play. Sometimes they don't put in the time I expect, but I try not to push. But I don't let them off completely. They enjoy travel and they have so many friends, and they can continue to meet a lot of friends. Judy has a good friend in Berkeley and she loves to go to tournaments so she can see her friends.

Barry: When Adam and Judy started playing, I put quarters on the table. If they hit the quarter they could keep it. It supported the idea that if you hit a good shot you were rewarded. I think I lost 5 dollars that night. They were very talented to begin with - coordinated. Lily's genes.

In 2005 your family played 594 USATT matches and won an average of 74% of the time. How did you build this habit of winning throughout your family?

Lily: I think Judy and Adam give me motivation. I want to show the kids. I do swimming and walking. The harder you work at it you have a better body. They grew up more mature. They understand that if you want to win you have to try your best.
In the last 2-3 years I don't train with them as much. If you want to keep your game you have to practice, but with so much homework they're under pressure. They understand that if they want to win they have to practice. They learn by watching other people, too. I just practice with them now. And Barry does, too.

In '05 Adam's won about 84% of his USATT matches. How does he do it?

Barry: He's much better than the people he's played. Adam is well trained. He's obviously fairly smart. He knows how to think and play at the same time with good technique. Good concentration. He has the whole package.

He moves well. He has an aptitude for most sports, but especially table tennis. He trained in China for 3-4 summers. He's had Johnny Huang help him out. He's had good international success playing in the junior ranks. He's beaten some top players. He's within the elite category.

He was invited to the world junior championships, but we thought it would be better to play the Nationals instead of 2-3 matches in Austria. But he took a chance, and he did well.

What is your daily/weekly Training routine? Coaching routine?

Lily: I find time to train with my kids 2-4 hours a week. I coach 2-4 hours a day maximum and I swim twice a week. I really need to organize my schedule.

Barry: I play with Judy. I play sometimes at the club. I play whenever I have a chance. Some weeks are better than others. I think Adam does more running and weight lifting now to keep in shape with table tennis a couple times a week, plus competition. The family tries to go down on Friday night to play with him at the Princeton TTC.

Judy: There's no concrete schedule. It's pretty much when I finish homework. I shoot for an hour a day, then 2 hours on the weekend on Saturday or Sunday. 6-7 hours a week. It should be more but with school it's hard. I'm a junior and there's a little bit of pressure in your junior year of high school.

When you play are you doing battle or feeling joy? (Or experiencing the joy of doing battle?)

Lily: I enjoy it more, especially when I get older. The game has given me so much. I lost a match to a younger player at the Nationals, and because of that match I didn't make the American team. But I thought, "Hurray for the younger generation." When I was young it was a competition and I had to win. I still want to win, but you have to win fair. It's the same in business. You have to have a good attitude.

Barry: Battle! I think about how to win when I play in tournaments. What can I do tactically to get an advantage and what are the weaknesses. When I practice I think about how to get better. It's definitely a battle for Adam, too.

Judy: Probably more joy. I'm not as competitive as some people. It's not like I want to kill the other person - it's not personal. I'm pretty much in a zone when I play. People have asked me what I think about - they wanted to know what I was thinking at the Nationals when I was down in the fifth game and I came back to win, but I didn't know what to say.

What is your current equipment? How would you classify your playing style?

Judy: I use a Stiga offense blade, with Magna on my backhand and Mendo MP on my forehand. I'm a close to the table looper. I'm trying to become more of a two-winged looper.

Barry: Adam is an aggressive attacker. Good power shots on FH and BH.

I'm an all around player. Mostly an aggressive spinner. I use a Butterfly paddle with Chinese inverted rubber on the forehand, and Killerspin inverted rubber on the backhand. But it changes.

Lily: Aggressive FH attack. I play fast and hit hard. When I was in China I trained with the men more. I use a Stiga carbon offense+ racket with short pips on the FH and long pips on the BH. I play penhold and only use the long pips for one or two points a game.

Lily, how did your background in China prepare you for your career in the U.S.?

Lily: I was among the best on the Chinese youth team - top 16 - in the Chinese National Championship four-five years straight. I was the best in my province. I was Top 16 in the country many times. Also #3 in Women's Doubles at the Chinese National Championships. After that they sent me to college for Phys. Ed to be a women's coach. I graduated, then came to the U.S. when I was 23. You know - the American dream. I had two babies, so I stopped playing for 2-3 years. But it was easy to pick up the game again.

When I look back I'm happy I became a U.S. citizen. I'm enjoying being in the game again. I have so many friends through table tennis - I met Barry through table tennis.

Barry: We'd play and practice. A couple of years later we had a relationship. My parents also met through table tennis and married.

We really like the social aspect of the game. We have friends all over the world, and we like playing to see our friends. Judy has great friends in California, and she looks forward to seeing them. It's not only a sport, but it's a social activity that we really enjoy and that's what keeps bringing people back. You don't have that
as much that I’ve seen in other sports. With Table Tennis we have good friends all over the country. Some are 20-25 year friendships.

Tell us about your table tennis background. How did you get started? How did you reach your current level?

Judy: When I first started we always came to the club because of my mom and Barry. Adam and I didn’t know how to play. Every single day we saw people play, so we got started.

Barry: I started playing seriously in college at 18. I was part of the Rutgers team - Rutgers was a powerhouse from 78-88. The team included Brian Eisner, Jeff Steif, Elliot Katz, Paul Rubis, Dr. George Dendrios. A lot of us were on that team.

My parents played table tennis - they made the finals in Mixed Doubles in the late 40s. My parents used to go to the club, but I stayed home. It wasn’t until I was about 17 that I saw it properly played.

I joined the New Jersey Table Tennis Club in Westfield in ’78. A lot of people helped me out and I played a lot. I did a lot of tournaments. I was president for 14 years. It’s one of the premiere clubs in the nation.

What are your next steps in table tennis?

Lily: Since we don’t have funding from the USOC, I’d like to use some resources from China, like a cultural exchange, to take a team to China to train and have their best players come over here. I want to see the next generation, an American born player, make it to the top 10 in the world. As a coach I’d like to coach a top 10 player. I’m leaving Sunday, January 22nd for Beijing to see if I can arrange to bring 16 players this summer - eight boys and eight girls - to the National Chinese training center in Beijing - to the “secret” Zheng Ding International Table Tennis Training Center where the Chinese National Team conducts its secret training sessions for two months of intense training before the worlds.

Judy: I’m not sure what ’06 will bring. I’m hoping to make the national team someday. I finished 6th this year and they take four players. Age isn’t really a factor in table tennis. Like my mom, for example. So it’ll be awhile before older players stop playing and open up some spots.

Barry: Maintaining.

What are Adam’s goals as part of the U.S. Men’s National Team? What will he focus on as he prepares for the World’s this spring?

Barry: It’s a good question. He’s got to get approval from the school and figure out how he’s going to keep up and go to the World’s in April. We don’t know what they think - we hope they think it’s a good thing. But he’s got to be able to keep up and school takes precedence. I think his level helped him get accepted to Princeton. And if he’s doing well in school, they should let him do it. But if not, he may have to make a decision. There will always be more world championships. He already played in one, two years ago.

Clearly academics are a priority in the First Family. Judy, how do you balance academics with table tennis? What subjects do you like most?

Judy: Academics come first. I try to finish 75% of my homework first, then play. I like languages - I’m taking French. I used to like math, but now it’s one of the toughest subjects.

How is college going so far for Adam? How does he balance academics with tennis? What has the transition been like?

Barry: It’s been a great transition. He’s very busy, though. He has about 20% of the table tennis time that he used to have because of so much schoolwork.

What are Adam’s plans for an Operations Research and Financial Engineering/ Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering major?

Barry: No idea. We have no clue what he might do with it. He might go into some kind of financial thing, but who knows. He’s a first quarter freshman.

Volleyball player Gabrielle Reese talks about how much she has learned about life from Volleyball. What has table tennis taught you about life so far?

Barry: Adam has a very good understanding of different cultures. He’s traveled the world. He has better patience for himself and other things. He’s a lot more in control of his emotions because of table tennis. He has a burning desire to perform well.

Judy: It’s helped me know that if you set a goal you’ll be able to reach it. If you never believe you can do it, you never will.

Lily: Discipline. If you want to be a good player you have to train. And sportsmanship. You have to earn every point. Commitment. You have to set goals. You have to be a good person - that way you make more friends. I teach my young students how to respect the coach and the other player in a match.

Barry: It’s given me an appreciation for all different cultures. It’s also taught me that there’s always another game tomorrow. For the kids, it shows what discipline and dedication can bring to them.

What are your interests outside of table tennis?

Lily: I have some interest in the real estate business. I want to buy real estate in China and California, but right now it’s just a dream. I enjoy travel. I like to sing - mostly in the shower. But we have a Karaoke system, and every July 4 we have a party and invite friends, 95% are because of table tennis. Everybody has to sing.

Barry: Adam has to do school and table tennis. But he likes all sports, including watching and playing basketball. He’s a sports enthusiast. He played competitive Frisbee in high school.

Judy: I like other sports, but none seriously. I play basketball, tennis, and swimming, but more for pleasure than cross training. Table tennis takes up most of the time.

Barry: I still play tennis and golf. In tennis I was New Jersey state college champion in 1981. I had a ranking of 34 in men’s in the eastern section of USTA. I was also a very good bowler - I worked very hard to get there. I would ride 3-4 miles with two balls on my bike just so I could practice. That was the only transportation I had. I did the same with tennis. My kids are lucky because they have in-house players. We have 2-3 tables up and running.

Barry, tell us about your work outside of TT.

Barry: I’m a computer consultant. I develop Web applications and business applications.

The “First Family” at the 2005 USA Nationals

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<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
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<td>1st Over 40 Women's Singles</td>
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<td>1st Hardbat Singles</td>
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<td>Semifinals of Women's Doubles</td>
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<td>Judy Hugh</td>
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I'm a programmer – I have a degree in computer science. But I enjoy helping Lily with her business, too.

Lily, how do you balance being an entrepreneur, a player, a coach and a mom?

Lily: #1 I enjoy the game. The more I play the younger I feel. I’m able to train with kids and still show the kids I’m a good player. I can still win, so why not keep playing. I enjoy the travel, meeting new friends, and seeing old friends. It’s fun. As a mom, I’m still good enough to play doubles with the kids.

Almost five years ago you said in an article with the Star Ledger that, "I think I can play forever. The longer I play, the better touch I have." Could you expand on that idea?

Lily: You play so many years that you have a better hand. European players play for twenty years. They have a better touch. The Chinese keep changing players – they think the young player is always better. They’re afraid to take a chance. Ma Lin was world champion and now plays in Germany. He can still beat the Chinese players.

It’s like Cheng Yinghua at the Nationals in 2004, when you coach you touch the racket, so your touch improves.

Would you give one key training tip for recreational players?

Lily: Learn good technique. Find a coach. Do multi-ball training. In China - as a pro - we spent 40-50% of the time in multi-ball.

Barry: Consistency. Get the ball back on the table.

Judy: Just practice. Repetition on forehand and backhand. Practice makes a big difference.

What trends do you see in junior/cadet table tennis for girls and boys?

Lily: I think the new generation is much better than the last generation. I like to focus on the women. The Women’s team is in the top 16 in the world. There is more competition for the men, but I think the girls have more of a chance. It’s easier to get a medal, and if we get a medal, maybe we can get more money and professional training. The girls will have a better chance.

Intense Training and Fun in the Sun:
American Players Visit Romania for the Seventh Time
By Mimi Bosika

"Everything about our experience in Romania was inspiring," declared table tennis player Joel Lubick. For the seventh time in eight years the Davison Athletic Club Table Tennis Team took a trip to Romania in the summer of 2005 to train and enjoy a three-week vacation on the Black Sea coast. Lubick was one of the six team members who were led by former U.S. Olympic Coach Jon Bosika.

The first source of inspiration for the team was training with Europe’s top junior girl at Romania’s Olympic training center. The trip to Romania took place a few weeks before these players went on to win several medals at the European Junior Championships, including first and second place in the junior girls’ category. American junior player Danny Dulkin, who took the trip for the second year in a row, remembers the atmosphere: “Romania was one of the best experiences of my life. It’s a great feeling walking into the gym early in the morning. You see champions playing table tennis in the most competitive environment I’ve ever seen.” Dulkin was most excited about being able to practice with Daniela Dodean, the 2005 European Junior Champion.

In addition to training for at least two hours, twice per day, the players had the chance to relax and experience Romanian culture. According to Lubick, whose wife and daughter accompanied him on the trip, "After the morning practice I was able to go with my family to take advantage of many sightseeing opportunities or enjoy authentic Romanian food at our choice of dozens of restaurants within walking distance of the hotel. However, our favorite lunchtime activity was relaxing on the beach and swimming in the Black Sea.”

Romania’s effort to join the European Union is evident by the development of its tourism industry. A number of new restaurants, hotels and entertainment options make the Black Sea coast one of the most attractive and affordable vacation destinations in Europe. Especially for young people, the new Aqua Magic water park was an adventurous experience. Adults enjoyed seeing impressive architecture, such as the People’s Palace in Bucharest and the castle of former Empress Maria Theresa, which they stopped to visit on the way to Bulgaria’s “Golden Sands” beach.

After all is said and done, the main goal of the trip was to help players of all levels excel at table tennis. Junior player Don Hinshaw confirmed that this goal was reached by admitting that he “gained more table tennis experience in three weeks in Romania than in the nine months of playing prior to the trip.” A major part of Hinshaw’s experience is his participation in friendly matches against several Romanian teams, which allowed him to gain invaluable insight into international competition. When asked about his table tennis experience, Lubick explained, “We were able to play against world-class players, in the midst of world-class coaches, doing the same drills that they have done every day to make themselves champions.” When they returned to the United States, Jon Bosika’s players felt inspired and confident that their new and improved skills would help them achieve better results in domestic competitions. Nevertheless, many of them wait impatiently until the 2006 trip, when they hope to play more, see more, and create more memories.
Interview with Ilija Lupulesku

USA Men’s Singles & Doubles Champion

By Larry Hodges

DOB: Oct 30, 1967
Height: 5’9”
Weight: 180
Equipment: Killerspin Nitrx 5Z Max sponge, Killerspin Stilo blade, Killerspin Propel glue
Sponsor: Killerspin

You went 28-2 in games at the Nationals in winning the Men’s Singles for the third time in four years. How did you prepare? How was it different from last year, when you didn’t win?

This year I played extensively in Germany and worked on my conditioning. I practiced regularly with my teammate Alexandar Karakasevic. His game has improved quite a bit and he is a really good practice partner. This helped me prepare for the Nationals.

Although you beat him 4-0 in the Men’s Singles Final, Mark Hazinski was the only player to get games off you in the event (losing 4-2 in the Final Twelve Round Robin). The two of you also won Men’s Doubles. How is his game coming along, and what does he need to do to jump up a level?

Mark has improved a lot, he is much stronger than last year. Marks needs higher level practice partners, regular coaching, regular competition and a little better footwork. Mark is getting a lot better but still needs to improve on some of the finer points of the game. Johnny Huang and myself who are the senior members of the Killerspin Crew help some younger players improve. We will also be creating a plan for Freddie Gabriel, who we have just signed as the newest member of the Killerspin Crew.

At the Nationals, what players are your toughest matches, where would you be in danger if you don’t play well?

This year I was really well prepared. I have been practicing and competing against some of the World’s top players, so I felt very confident. Mark gave me a good match the first time we played, but I was well prepared so I was really ready.

Tactically, how do you play Mark? How do you play Adam Hugh, who you played in the semifinals? How is it different?

I know Mark’s game pretty well now. I have been practicing with him since I came to the U.S., both he and I lived in Chicago. Many players try to beat me on the first or second ball. I think this was both Mark’s and Adam’s strategy. But if I am in practice, I have an advantage because I have a lot of experience in International tournaments including many finals. I have also beat almost every top player in the World in my career. So I have a big experience advantage. I also think I understand the game a little better than they do at this point in my career. In Table Tennis the little things you learn in international competition matter a lot.

I am good at returning serves so it is very difficult to beat me on the 3rd ball. Also I have a big advantage once we get into a rally, it is very difficult to loop past me. I am also a pretty tricky player, I can use this against inexperienced players to my advantage.

Tell us about your playing in the German Leagues. What team are you on, what city, how often do they play, how have you done, etc.

I’m on the Pluderhausen Team. The team is based in Pluderhausen, Germany near Stuttgart. When in Germany I practice every day twice a day. We have matches almost every weekend, during the season. Our team is in first place. Alexandar Karakasevic and myself have the best record in doubles in the league. In singles I lost my first match and then have won every match since. I was slightly injured prior to the beginning of the league. Once I recovered I went undefeated.

Who do you train with, and how often?

My main practice partner is Alexandar Karakasevic. I also practice with Lin Ju from the Dominican Republic, Paszy from Hungary and Bratanov from Belgium. When we are together we practice every day twice a day.

Are you doing any coaching these days, or mostly playing?

While in Chicago, I spend most of my time coaching young players. I also practice for my own game with younger members of the Killerspin Crew, Sasa Drinic, Arturo Shiu and Biba. This coming year Johnny Huang and I will be creating plans to help younger players in the Killerspin Crew. I think they were particularly helpful to Mark, Barney and Adam. They all had very big wins at the Nationals. Both Johnny and I were very happy that Mark, Adam and Barney made the team along with myself. Since we are all sponsored by Killerspin it felt great because our team did so well.

When I am in Germany I am focused on practicing, playing and helping Alexandar Karakasevic improve. I am acting as his main strategist. We have worked quite a bit on his game this past year. He has unbelievable talent he just needs to have someone help him on track. That is my job. He has had some major wins against some of the World’s top players this year. He recently beat world #14 Hao Shuai and Olympic Champion Ryu Seang Min in the same tournament. These are important steps forward in his career.

What are your upcoming table tennis plans and goals?

My main objective this year is to help younger players improve their game. Both Johnny Huang and I have been given the task by Killerspin to help young American players. We will be conducting special training camps for the younger Killerspin players, trying to help them with the finer points of the game. I had decided last year to retire from the team to give some younger players a chance to gain some experience in international competition that I did not need. After the Nationals win, Johnny and I decided that I should stay on the Team to act as a mentor and a type of team captain, since I have responsibility to help them (Mark, Barney and Adam) as Killerspin sponsored players anyway. We added world #70 Thomas Keinath to the Killerspin Team this year. He will also help.
provide our young players with world-class competition. Thomas is a very good player and will be a good practice partner for our young players when we conduct our training camps.

I am also trying to get Alexandar Karakasevic to the next level. I think if he stays focused he can make a big impact in the sport. He really has extraordinary talent. Now he just needs a little support and guidance. That is my job.

As the Senior Member of the Killerspin Team in the U.S., I have been given the task of identifying young American players that have the potential to be good players. At the Nationals Johnny, Robert and Sasa identified three players that we thought had potential. After they went through the interview process we decided to sponsor them. There was 10-year-old Seth Peck, Laura Xiao and Freddie Gabriel. Robert has given me and Johnny the task of helping our younger sponsored players improve their games. If I can help make an incremental improvement in American Table Tennis competitiveness, then I will feel very good.

Players are always amazed at your counterlooping. What suggestions do you have for players to learn to counterloop like that?

It takes a lot of practice and you need to be taught this skill. It is important that you learn the subtleties of looping. This is one of the things I hope to do in some of the camps I conduct.

Tell us about how you got started at table tennis, and how you became a world-class player.

I started playing at 9 years old. I was lucky that Yugoslavia had a very good system and world-class coaches and players for me to learn from. My first coach was John Bosika, he taught me all the fundamentals of the sport. He was a great coach and mentor. We are still very good friends. I owe all my early success to him. He put me on the path to being a world-class player.

Later I also learned a lot from great players like Surbek, Stipancic, Karakasevic (Alexandar's father) and Kalinic. They all were in the top ten in the world. I also had great teammates like Zoran Primorac who I could practice with. We really pushed one another.

Any suggestions for up-and-coming players?

Learn the fundamentals of the game first. Good fundamentals give you the proper base upon which you can grow. I see a lot of players here that lack good fundamentals. They also lack a deep understanding of the subtleties of the game. They also need high-level practice, and when they are ready, increasingly higher levels of international competition.

That is why I want to be a coach here. I have experience at the highest level of the sport and I believe I can teach both the fundamentals and game strategy. I feel this is a contribution I can make to American Table Tennis. I will be conducting a number of camps this year. Some will be only for Killerspin sponsored players. There will be some for young kids and others will be for anyone who wants to improve their game.

Players also need a support system. This support system includes their family, association, coaches and sponsors. I was blessed to have a governmental, practice, competition and family support system growing up. This helped both me and my teammate Zoran Primorac reach the highest level of the sport. I am lucky because my sponsor Killerspin has really given me a great support system here in the U.S. in the later stages of my career. This is also important for young players that they have a sponsor that is willing to help them and give them access to the resources they need to improve. In addition to the help Killerspin gives its players, we also get to do a lot of really fun things. Many of the Killerspin Crew members have been on television numerous times, seen and done things that have never been done in Table Tennis before. We have had the chance to hang out with celebrities, drive exotic cars like Porsches, Vipers and Ferraris and take trips around the World to do exhibitions. I got to meet Arnold Schwarzenegger, play a charity event with Jason Taylor of the Miami Dolphins and do an exhibition in Puerto Rico. Barney was on Conan O'Brien, Biba was featured in the year's biggest issue of Time Magazine. The company also helps give us exposure to the world outside Table Tennis by helping us learn about principals of business and excellence.

Killerspin has an almost fanatical focus to achieve excellence. The company pushes both Johnny and myself very hard to get results. We don't get to celebrate being second if we could have won first. A lot of good things have happened this past year. We got to celebrate our team winning the major male events at the U.S. Nationals and every spot on the U.S. Men's National Team, the Team Karakasevic and I play for is in first place in the German League, and our sponsored team, which Johnny Huang plays on, won the Chinese Super League. Barney was player of the year in the California Table Tennis League and Adam Hugh was selected Male Player of the Year by USATT. It is great to be a part of a team that really cares about achievement but also really cares about the players and the sport.

What do you do these days when you are not playing table tennis?

When I am not thinking about Table Tennis I enjoy hanging out with my family. I have a wife and young daughter.
Any time the top eight seeds in the Open Singles event remain courtside to watch the action, something special is happening. Especially when the observers include World #45 Aleksandar Karakasevic with three upset wins at the German Pro Tour last month (including Ryu Seung Min, World #7). Also courtside were World #70 Thomas Keinath, U.S. #1 Ilijia Lupulesku, and the entire U.S. Men's Team. The actual competitors may have been of more interest as 1717-rated Donald Winde defeated Lupulesku (2768) 54-52, 1498-rated Michael Meier won over Barney Reed, Jr. (2504), and Thomas McGivern (1049) bested 2607-rated Mark Hazinski (after Mark caught Thomas at 49-ali!). The 51-point handicap event was a huge success with incredible play by the victor Karakasevic (2861) as he spotted Keinath (2728) ten points and won by nine! Karakasevic then defeated Adam Hugh (2576) 51-37 in the final after giving Hugh 20 points! The handicap event was one of 36 events played over three days by 246 entrants at the festive 2005 Killerspin Holiday Open. As part of Killerspin's continuing efforts to grow the sport of Table Tennis, non-rated "recreational" championships were held with over 70 players competing from as far away as New Jersey, Florida, and Western Canada; many of these first-time players became members of USATT. The schedule for Day One included a youth clinic followed by junior championships with a clinic for USAATT members in the afternoon. Of special note on Day One was the entertaining Parent-Child Doubles event won by Tyrene Petty and his daughter Sara James from Tennessee. The very successful Recreational Age-Group Championships were held on Day Two along with two rated doubles events (U3200 & U4400) and the above-mentioned 51-Point Handicap Event.

The 4400 Doubles achieved another of Killerspin's tournament goals—to have the top players team up with lower-rated players. And it was fun as each of the rounds finished, a doubles team with a 2400+ rated player lost, until Jason Miller (2167) and Spenser Lam (2178) took first prize and defended their 4400 Doubles Championship from last year. Tournament Adult Most Valuable Player Award went to Jason Miller for taking first in Under 2300, winning the 4400 doubles, and making the semifinals of the Under 2500 event. The Tournament Junior Most Valuable Player Award went to Vivek Ramakrishnan (rated 891) for winning the Under 13 and Under 15 events and winning his preliminary round robin groups in Under 1300 and Under 1500. All rated singles events were held on Day Three with the Open Singles event having ten players rated over 2400 from six different countries. The interest heightened, as many of the player match-ups were the same as the random draw Handicap Event played the night before. Adam Hugh (2576) narrowly defeated Georgia (Gina) Pota (2401) from Hungary in the 1/8's by overcoming six match points with the scores of -15, -9, 12, 11, and 8! Gina is one of the newest members of Team Killerspin and is ranked #55 in the world. Hugh, playing at an even higher level, defeated Sana Drinkic 9, 6, and 10 in the quarters before losing to Karakasevic in the semifinals. In the other quarters, Hazinski got by Judy Hugh 3-1, Karakasevic handily won over Beat Stauffer (2434) from Switzerland 3-0, and Keinath (another recently sponsored Killerspin player) bested Reed in four deuce games 11, 11, -10, and 11. The second semifinal featured the two-winged power of Hazinski against the control and experience of Keinath with the latter winning 9, 6, -10, 3, and 8.

The 4 out of 7 final was a repeat of a semifinal Handicap match played on Thursday. Two players from Europe vied in Chicago for $2,000 in first place prize money, top-seed Aleksandar Karakasevic (Kara) from Serbia and second-seed Thomas Keinath (Tommie) from Germany. The style of the two competitors was instantly made known. Tommie just keeps coming at the left-hander Kara and coming at him and coming at him. He will control the table and own the table (kind of like Chess—control the middle of the board). Kara will have none of it and uses his incredible touch to bring Tommie in tight and then finishes with big explosive backhand winners.

The first and third games were well fought with, apparently, some of the momentum going back to Kara with his 12-10 win in the third game after losing the first two at 9 and 6. Tommie takes back control of the match with well-placed shots against a tiring Kara to take game four at 3. The somewhat anticlimactic fifth and final game and the $2,000 prize money was won 11-8 by the determined Tommie. The winner credited his victory to the extra sleep the night before, the knowledge he gained playing against Kara in the Handicap event, and his ability to "beobachten sehr gut." Beobachten means to observe so Tommie was seeing the ball extremely well or one might say he was in the zone. He was also happy to gain 25 rating points—to have a rating of over 2700 and win any points is tough. An interesting side note that perfectly sums up the wonderful attitude of Thomas Keinath is that after taking first prize, he asked, "What can I do to help?" Help with what, Tommie? His answer? "I want to help the volunteers take down the tables and pack up the equipment." Wow! He later played with and coached several of the volunteers.

Three out of the four top seeds in the Under 2500 event were women! The seeding was Beat Stauffer (2434), Judy Hugh (2418), Gina Pota (2401) and Biba (2362). In the preliminary round robin groups, Stauffer won handily and Judy Hugh fought hard to win in five games over Lukasz Fita, -8, 11, 5, -3 and 10. Fita is a Polish-born ever-improving player living in Chicago (a local hero to the one million Polish people in Chicago and its metropolitan area). Gina and Jason Miller advanced from the other two groups. The interesting match of the elimination rounds was the semifinal between Gina and Judy Hugh. Judy played very well and full of confidence as she battled Gina only to lose against World #55, 11-8 in the fifth! Stauffer won the final 6, -4, 7, and 12 against Gina.

In a fun and festive atmosphere, much was tried at the three-day event. Foster youth and family play, promote table tennis by reaching out to recreational players, teach youth and tournament players table tennis basic skills, have competitive play for lower-rated players against and with world-class players—these were the pre-event goals. Based on the smiles of all, mission accomplished.

Special thanks to the extremely hard-working volunteers, Mike Nowicki, Julian Shin, Lukasz Fita, Anna Fita, and Valeriy Khodyryev, all of whom freely gave their time on multiple days. Also, thank you to the numerous other volunteers that helped during the tournament. We appreciate the professional manner in which Kagen Lee and Al Grambo officiated.

Open: 1st Thomas Keinath; 2nd Aleksandar Karakasevic; 3-4: Adam Hugh/Mark Hazinski.
U2500: Beat Stauffer, 2nd Gina Pota.
U2300: 1st Jason Miller; 2nd Spenser Lam.
U1900: 1st Bikramjeet Singh; 2nd Matthew Scott.
U1700: 1st Irina Fufaeva; 2nd Tim Chau.
U1500: 1st Vinh Vuong; 2nd Aleksey Pelekh.
U1300: 1st John Ackerman; 2nd David Stuckey.
U1100: 1st Adam Bruss; 2nd Supaneda Arayameek.


U3200 Doubles: Tyrone John Petty; 2nd Yu Moy/JC Ho.

Judy Hugh

2005 Junior Girls Team Trials Champion
2005 US Nationals U-2300 Champion
2004 Junior Girls Team Trials Champion
2004 US Open U-18 Girls Champion

2003 US Nationals U-2100 Champion
2003 ITTF Canadian Junior Championships Girls Cadet Singles Gold Medalist
2003 North American Cadet Girls Champion
2003 US Open U-16 Girls Champion
2003 US Open U-14 Girls Champion
2002 Cadet Girls Team Trials Champion
2001 US Open U-12 Girls Champion
2000 US Nationals Girls Primary School Champion

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The Recovery Zone

It's not often that a player becomes famous not for winning a match, but for losing one in spectacular fashion. Even those rooting for Michael Maze in the quarterfinals of Men's Singles at the World Championships last year could feel Hao Shuai's pain when he lost the match from up 3-0, with three match points— one of them with Maze slipping, falling and returning the ball lying on the floor—and then Hao went on to lose four consecutive games. But he's a talented, skilled young player, and his mental outlook after that devastating loss was more positive than many had feared. Although he recognized the magnitude of the event, he said: “I'm young, I have time to get over it.”

Hao Shuai’s game seems effortless and his movements are as smooth as can be. The lefty has extraordinary touch, and his nimble footwork easily gets him in position for his power shots. That footwork centers on an optimized recovery and anticipation of the next move.
From a certain level on, most missed shots are not a result of an incorrect stroke, but of a footwork failure. The player just didn’t manage to get himself into the correct position by the time the ball arrived on his side.

Good footwork not only entails the performance of the correct sequence of steps, but the positioning in zones that are most appropriate for a given situation – be it close to the table for over the table play, mid-distance for rallying or farther back for long-distance counterlooping or defensive play. This also includes a well-defined “area of recovery.” It is a neutral zone to which we move after serving, receiving serves or other close-to-the-table play, or we can advance to it from mid-distance in the middle of a rally to put pressure on our opponent. It is an area from which most other zones can be accessed with one or two steps.

For serve, receive and over-the-table play, we operate within a foot or two of the table. When receiving serve, we usually want to maximize the possibility of using the forehand, so we set up as wide to our backhand side as we feel we can manage. The limiting factor is our speed to reach a long serve to our forehand. The faster we are, the farther we can afford to stand to the side.

Since Hao Shuai is a left-hander, right-handers must invert the sides. In picture 1 he is set up with his left foot on the extension of the side line. With good reason, he has full confidence that few will dare serve long to his forehand. This enables him to receive the serve with his forehand, although it is quite wide to the right side of the table.

The subdivision of his steps is very clear. Coinciding with the opponent’s toss and serve he takes a short step forward with his left foot as soon as he has ruled out the long, fast serve to his forehand. Now he recognizes the exact placement and steps out to his right by a few inches (3-5). He steps in with his left foot (6) and pushes the ball back. Here now comes the portion of the positioning footwork that often distinguishes good players from weaker ones: the recovery to a neutral intermediate zone that is only rarely the one from which the next ball is played, but an area that allows quick access to mid-distance play as well as return to the table if need be (7-10). Hao Shuai prefers to serve the ball early, so he stays a little closer. Taller players, or those who prefer to take the ball later, would set up farther back. It is important to fully “land” into that zone, because this will make a solid base for the movement to the next contact. While recovering, Hao Shuai already anticipates a backhand as his next shot. That’s why his feet land on a line almost parallel to the end-line. If he had anticipated a forehand, his left foot would be a little farther back. As it is, his next shot only requires a small adjustment. He spreads his stance and hops back a little to prepare his backhand loop (11-12). Had the shot been deeper, he could easily have hopped back farther, stepped farther to his right for a wider shot or even covered a shot to his middle by adjusting to his left.

Since there is the perception of great time pressure, players often leave out the recovery to that neutral zone. They rush to where they think they need to be, arrive there off balance, and are limited to a weak, imprecise shot. Yet, how often do we hear someone at the club yell out after missing a shot, “I rushed!” The vast majority of errors occur not because a player is too late, but because he’s too early.

If that happens to you, you can fix it. Identify where you think is most comfortable as your recovery zone. Look at it carefully and memorize it. Practice the exact steps it takes you to get there. Test an area a bit closer, a bit farther, more to one side or the other and you’ll find one that fits you best. For a while, it will take a conscious effort to get there after every serve or serve receive, but by and by it will become second nature and you’ll find out that the more time you take, the more time you have.

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