Stefan Feth
Exclusive Interview

Also Inside:
USATT Team Leagues - Pages 74-75
Junior Olympic Coverage
Learn To Cover Your Middle!
Play and Feel Like A Champ with:

**Hallmark Super Special**

- **Hallmark Super Special**
  - $24.97
  - You Save 37%

**Yasaka Tornado**

- **Yasaka Tornado**
  - $19.97
  - You Save 29%

**andro Maxcell J.M.S**

- **andro Maxcell J.M.S**
  - $24.97
  - Regular - $37.95

**Stiga Super Carbon Blade**

- **Stiga Super Carbon Blade**
  - $49.97
  - Regular - $96.95

**Donic Dehli Table Used**

- **Donic Dehli Table Used**
  - $799.97
  - You Save 33%

Find More Year-End Clearance

THE TABLE TEN

ping-pong.com/ttpioneers | 1-800-319-
Shop our Year-End Clearance Deals!

- **Yasaka Extreme Speed**
  - Price: $19.97
  - You Save: 33%

- **Banda 3* Balls**
  - Price: $3.97
  - Save: 50%

- **Stiga Tiger Shirt**
  - Price: $19.97
  - You Save: 47%

- **adidas MiTTenium**
  - Price: $49.97
  - You Save: 44%

- **Stiga Premium ERS**
  - Price: $44.97
  - Save: 47%

- **andro Speedstyle Shirt**
  - Price: $28.97
  - You Save: 33%

- **adidas 3Bars T-Shirt**
  - Price: $19.97
  - You Save: 33%

*More Deals At ping-pong.com/ttpioneers*

TENNIS PIONEERS
PING (7464) | ttpioneers@ping-pong.com
TOURNAMENTS
Gao at the China Pro Tour by Ian Marshall .............................................31
ITTF Pro Tour Results ........................................................................32
World Veterans Championships Revisited by Ray Fitz .........................50
Women's World Cup ...........................................................................50
Maccabi Australia International Games ................................................50
USA Tournament Results ....................................................................51
SportsFest X “Team” and “Top Gun” Singles by Tony Bernstein ...............52
Indiana Open & Indiana Giant RR and Two Person Teams by Robert Clyde ..53
Decatur Open by Michael Wetzel ..........................................................54
Foothills Celebrity Open by Bill Neely ..................................................54
John Voos Memorial by Mike Branch ....................................................55
Wild Bill Hickok by George Taplin ......................................................55
Junior Olympics by Alan Williams .......................................................66
Eastern Open by Alan Williams ............................................................70
Berkeley Open by Alan Williams ..........................................................72

COACHING
Basics Corner: Counterlooping by Glenn Tepper ....................................26
McAfee’s Mechanics: Simple Fixes to Common Problems by Richard McAfee .26
Tips of the Month by Carl Donner ..........................................................27
Zoltan Fejer-Konnerth: Covering the Ball to the Middle by Wei Wang ........76

COACHING
Basics Corner: Counterlooping by Glenn Tepper ....................................26
McAfee’s Mechanics: Simple Fixes to Common Problems by Richard McAfee .26
Tips of the Month by Carl Donner ..........................................................27
Zoltan Fejer-Konnerth: Covering the Ball to the Middle by Wei Wang ........76

USATT AND OTHER NEWS
Short Stuff .........................................................................................9
Cartoon .........................................................................................10
President’s Report by Sheri Pittman ......................................................16
Executive Director’s Report by Doru Gheorghe .....................................17
Board Listing ..................................................................................17
An Official’s View by Wendell Dillon ...................................................18
Senior Corner by Olga & Stan Kahan ...................................................18
They Said It by Larry Hodges .............................................................23
Ye Holly Ratings by NATT ...............................................................60
USATT Tournament Schedule .........................................................65

ON THE COVER:
Stefan Feth
Photo by NATT ©2006; Cover Design by Tom Nguyen ©2006

Official Sponsors
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tables</th>
<th>Balls</th>
<th>Apparel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Butterfly</td>
<td>Nittaku</td>
<td>STIGA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

USA Table Tennis Magazine
VOLUME 78, NUMBER 6

PUBLISHER
USA Table Tennis
One Olympic Plaza • Colorado Springs, CO 80909
719-866-4583 (ph) • 719-632-6071 (fax)
www.usatt.org • usatt@usatt.org

President
Sherry Soderberg Pittman

EDITOR, DESIGNER & ADVERTISING MANAGER
Larry Hodges
14403 Demetrias Way • Germantown, MD 20874
240-868-0129 (ph) • 240-868-0128 (fax)
Larry@larrytt.com

CIRCULATION DIRECTOR
Felisa Huggins • 719-866-4583 • ratings@usatt.org

EDITORIAL BOARD
Tom Wintrich (Chair), Tim Boggan, Jim McQueen, Sherry Pittman, Dennis Taylor, Wei Wang

HEADQUARTERS STAFF
Doru Gheorghe Executive Director
Felisa Huggins Tournament & Equipment Coordinator
Deborah Gray Accounting
Joyce Grooms Administrative Coordinator
Dana Schnell Programs Coordinator

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Tony Bernstein, Tim Boggan, Mike Branch, Robert Clyde, Carl, Danner, Wendell Dillon, Erich Ficker, Ray Fitz, Doru Gheorghe, Daniel Guttman, Steve, Isaacson, Larry Hodges, Olga & Stan Kahan, Liang Liu, Ian Marshall, Richard McAfee, Bill Neely, Khoa Nguyen, Sean O’Neill, Sheri Pittman, Olena Sowers, George Taplin, Glen Tepper, Wei Wang, Michael Wetzel, Alan Williams, Lily Yip

PHOTOGRAPHERS
Tim Boggan, Robert Clyde, Erich Ficker, Kingston Gec, ITTF, Richard McAfee, NAT, Bill Neely, Sean O’Neill, Diego Schal, Olena Sowers, George Taplin, Michael Wetzel, Lily Yip

PRINTER
Publication Printers, Denver, CO

PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID at Colorado Springs, Colorado, and other locations. USA Table Tennis Magazine (ISSN 1069-1701) is published bimonthly at Colorado Springs, Colorado, and is the official magazine of USA Table Tennis (USATT), a Class “A” member of the U.S. Olympic Committee.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to:
USA Table Tennis Magazine
One Olympic Plaza
Colorado Springs, CO 80909-5769

This publication is owned and published by USATT, a nonprofit corporation dedicated to supporting the sport of table tennis.

The views published within this publication are those of the contributing writer and do not necessarily represent the opinion of USA Table Tennis Magazine or USA Table Tennis. Similarly, the products and/or services included in this magazine are not necessarily endorsed by USATT.

Advertising inquiries may be directed to the editor. An advertising rate chart is available upon request, and linked at www.usatt.org/magazine

SUBSCRIPTIONS: All USATT memberships include a subscription. Rates in the U.S. and Canada are $40/year, $100/three years. Household $60/year or Junior $20/year. For all other countries, the fee is $60/year or $160/three years. Single copies are $3.95 plus postage, prepaid for addresses in the U.S. or Canada and $7 elsewhere. Magazine subscriptions without USATT membership are $20/year for USA & Canada, other countries $50/year. Subscription orders and inquiries concerning subscriptions should be sent to USATT Headquarters, One Olympic Plaza, Colorado Springs, CO 80909, admin@usatt.org. All subscription orders are payable in U.S. currency only. For CHANGE OF ADDRESS, send both old and new addresses and label from the most recent issue, or e-mail the address change to admin@usatt.org. Reproduction without express written permission is prohibited. Copyright ©2006. All rights reserved.
The future is now!
NEW FORMULA DONIC

1.8
2.0
MAX.

A speed glue ban in 2008? Waldner is ready.

The legend wears GOLD

"Waldner is progress. He has been one of the top players in the world for over 20 years, has been decorated with many gold medals, and has become immortal." - Well-known Swedish sports journalist Jens Felke describing the best table tennis player of all time.

With imminent radical changes to rubber, and a speed glue ban in the works, Waldner, the legend, will show the way.

Moving with the times are new Waldner rubbers from the Coppa series:

COPPA JO Has excellent playing characteristics using speed glue but is also much faster than other classic rubbers sheets when used without speed glue.

COPPA JO GOLD Sets a new standard with its built-in speed-glue effect. The sound and feel is similar to what you get using speed glue, giving performance you’ve dreamt about.

Until speed glue is banned, Coppa JO will let you continue to enjoy using speed glue, and Coppa JO Gold demonstrates that table tennis will remain an enjoyable sport even when speed glue is banned.

We recommend the new COPPA rubbers from Jan Ove Waldner for the following players:

COPPA JO is the Waldner rubber for all those who want to use speed glue right up to the last minute.

COPPA JO GOLD is the highest performing rubber from the FORMULA series and a replacement for speed gluing. This high performance rubber is suitable for highly trained attackers with good technical know-how.

ping-pong.com/ttpioneers | 1-800-319-PING (7464) | ttpioneers@ping-pong.com
AMICUS 3000 PLUS

The NEW Butterfly Amicus 3000 Plus offers an improved range of capabilities designed to improve your game. There is virtually no limit to the types of standard drills and advanced game related drills that can be practiced on the Amicus.

* Program and save up to 99 routines to specific speed, spin, and placement settings to develop basic strokes & switching skills; footwork drills; and drills where players require random ball placement and or random ball types.

* Simulate a “real game experience”, when drilling between topspin and underspin with the AFC (Automatic Frequency Control) function.

* Includes: Side mount, 1 gross of 40mm Butterfly 3-Star balls and a Ball Amigo (Save $282.00).

• Price includes freight charges (Save $$$)

1.800.611.7712 Butterflyonline.com
Tournament Used Tables
from the 2006 U.S. Nationals in Las Vegas, NV

**Centrefold 25 Sky Rollaway**
$1149.99* $1499.99 regular price

- **$350**
- NO ASSEMBLY REQUIRED
- 1" thick top
- Edge Banding
- 2"x3/4" Steel Rim
- 2" Square Steel Legs w/ adjustable feet
- Europa Net Set Included
- 5" Rubber Wheels

**Europa 25 Sky Stationary**
$949.99* $1249.99 regular price

- **$300**
- NO ASSEMBLY REQUIRED
- 1" thick top
- Edge Banding
- 2"x3/4" Steel Rim
- 2" Square Wooden Legs
- National League Net Set Included
- 1 7/8" Rubber Wheels

*Prices include freight charges to most destinations within the 48 contiguous United States.

www.butterflyonline.com • 1.800.611.7712
"I am facing the ITTF Speed Glue ban rather relaxed. Admittedly, only after I tested andro’s new PLASMA rubber. Changing my technique won’t be necessary, at most I need to adapt just a little bit. The new PLASMA rubber with the revolutionary TENSOR BIOS technology readies me for the future with certainty of fantastic speed and spin characteristics all without speed gluing, without harmful solvents."

Christian Süss, 2005 World Doubles Finalist

2008 - ARE YOU PREPARED?

In September of 2008 the ITTF Speed Glue ban will go into effect (no more volatile organic solvents in glue and rubber sheets). We already now offer innovative rubber with built-in speed-glue effect, fast, full of spin and ITTF-compliant.

For The Future Of Rubber: www.tnew-rubber.de

Or Do You Still Glue?

THE TABLE TENNIS PIONEERS

ping-pong.com/ttpioneers | 1-800-319-PING (7464) | ttpioneers@ping-pong.com
The 2006 U.S. Table Tennis Hall of Fame honorees are:
- Danny Pecora, player
- Khoa Nguyen, player
- Kasia Dawidowicz, player
- Si Wasserman, official
- Tim Boggan, receiving the Mark Mathews Lifetime Achievement Award

The ceremonies will be held at the USA Nationals at the Stratosphere Hotel on Thursday, Dec. 14, starting at 6:30 PM. Cost is $45. For more info, contact Steve Isaakson, President, U.S. TT Hall of Fame, 847-432-1201, or reserve your spot by sending $45 (made out to U.S. Table Tennis Hall of Fame) to him at 608 Ravinia Road, Highland Park, IL 60035. For more info on the Hall of Fame, and to see a complete listing and profiles of all 109 members, see www.usatt.org/organization/halloffame.

Advisors

Support the People Who Support USA Table Tennis!

Wiss In This Issue

Would you like to advertise in USA Table Tennis Magazine?
See www.usatt.org/magazine, email larry@larrytt.com, or call 240-686-0127

DRAMA

11

Silver... Up to $100
Malcolm Anderson
Dick Evans
Ted Friedman
Bill Guiot
J. Rufford Harrison
George Hendry
Richard Hicks
Bill Hodge
Dr. Azmy Ibrahim
Daniel and Laurence Koscielski
Jerry and Cindy March
Tom McEvoy
Andre Mehrabian
Tom and Marilyn Miller
Kenneth Palmer
Dick Peregrine
Thelma Sommer
Si Wasserman

21

Please send Donations to:
Steve Isaakson
U.S. Table Tennis Hall of Fame Booster Club
608 Ravinia Rd.
Highland Park, IL 60035
847-432-1201

Want to Join USA Table Tennis?
Receive USATT Magazine (as a member or subscriber)?
Play in USATT Tournaments?
Achieve a USATT Rating?
Find out about 250 USATT Clubs?
Go to www.usatt.org!
The India Community Center (ICC) is located in the heart of Silicon Valley. It is the largest non-profit Indo-American Community Center and facility in North America. It provides essential resources, educational and enrichment opportunities to 150,000 Indo-Americans residing in the Bay Area as well as the greater American population.

Table tennis is a popular sport with Asian Diaspora youth. ICC is doing a tremendous job at promoting table tennis. Children of all ages enjoy the game and you can see kids as young as five to adults over 70 playing TT at ICC. There are several ongoing TT camps and individualized coaching provided at their facility in Milpitas. U.S. National level coach Dennis Davis coached kids at ICC in a special winter camp in December 2005. Stefan Feth coached the kids in their special summer camp this July. Recently, Michelle and I were invited to play and coach about 60-70 kids at an ICC event. There were about 200 spectators.

The current facility has only six tables but the ICC TT club will be expanding to a full-time facility with 15+ tables in 2007. Rajul Sheth, one of the most popular TT players from India (who has played active table tennis at Indian National level for more than 15 years) is Table Tennis Coordinator and the key instructor at the Club. Rajul said, "When I started coaching at ICC in Jan 2005 we had only 10 kids registered in table tennis classes and at present we have more than 119 kids registered for Group lessons and league in Fall Quarter 2006."

ICC kids also started to dominate junior events in National tournaments. ICC won 13 Medals (including six gold) at the Junior Olympics in Virginia in July, 2006, and both Under 10 Boys and Under 10 Girls at the Stiga North American Tour at Berkeley. ICC also started a league for kids, with more than 20 kids playing more than 60 matches every Wednesday. With the Growing number of kids ICC hired Michelle Do (2000 U.S. Olympic team Member), Tuan Anh Nguyen (2350+ rated player) and four more 1800+ rated players as coaches to train their kids. Rajul’s approach ensures children become interested in the sport first with different fun games. Once the kids get engaged with the fun of the sport then moves to technique. Rajul said that if your child shows an interest in table tennis, ICC is definitely a place for them to learn and enhance their skills.

For more information, contact Rajul Sheth at rraajul@yahoo.com.

"Excuse me Sisyphus, you wouldn’t happen to have a smaller ball? Would you?"
THE MARK OF TIMELESS QUALITY

OFFICIAL SUPPLIER of 2003, 2004, 2005 World Table Tennis Championships!

Double Happiness Sports

TT EQUIPMENT

DHS TT TABLES
DHS TT BALLS
DHS TT NET & POST
DHS TT RACKETS
DHS TT BLADES
DHS TT RUBBERS
DHS TT APPAREL
DHS TT ACCESSORIES

DHS SPORTING GOODS

DHS BASKETBALL
DHS VOLLEYBALL
DHS SOCCER
DHS TENNIS
DHS BADMINTON
DHS WEIGHT LIFTING
DHS FENCING
DHS SKATEBOARD
DHS ROLLERBLADES
DHS SUPPORT

www.dhsamerica.com

NEW CLUB AND PREFERRED CUSTOMER PROGRAMS AVAILABLE

TABLES
BLADES
RUBBERS
BALLS

www.dhsamerica.com 1-877-PLAY-DHS (7529-347) info@dhsamerica.com
THE STIGA EXPERT ONLY $899
USED AT THE STIGA NORTH AMERICAN TOUR

- RETAIL PRICE OF $1299. THAT'S $350 OFF!
- PRICE INCLUDES NET SET AND SHIPPING!
- HIGHEST QUALITY TABLES WITH ITTF APPROVED 1" SURFACE
- CONVENIENT TO FOLD AND MOVE INTO STORAGE
- GREAT FOR HOME AND CLUB USE
- TAKES UP LITTLE SPACE
- EASY TO ASSEMBLE
- CALL FOR CLUB PRICES OR FOR DEALS ON "MORE EXPERIENCED" TABLES!

I HAVE WHEELS!

NORTH AMERICAN TABLE TENNIS
401 N. WASHINGTON ST. SUITE 110 ROCKVILLE, MD 20850
WWW.NATABLETENNIS.COM - EMAIL: INFO@NATABLETENNIS.COM

GET READY FOR ANOTHER EXCITING YEAR!

2007 STIGA® NORTH AMERICAN TOUR

JOIN THE NATT EXCITEMENT!

* FIRST CLASS EVENTS
* WORLD CLASS PLAYERS IN ACTION
* YING/LO JUNIOR COMPETITIONS
* FENGOLOD MEMORIAL SENIOR EVENTS
* BEST ORGANIZED PLAY IN AMERICA
* ON TIME SCHEDULING

UPCOMING TOURNAMENTS:
- WESTERN OPEN
- BERKELEY OPEN
- SOUTHEASTERN OPEN
- EASTERN OPEN
- AND MORE COMING SOON!
Train where the Pros Train!

Training at TTC Zugbrucke is both fun and enjoyable! The long established table tennis school caters to over 5,000 players each year. It is a great experience for both the beginner player to the professional player. Plan your trip to coincide with a Bundesliga Match that is played right at the TTC Zugbrucke facility and catch the Pros competing in the world’s premier Table Tennis League!

TTC Zugbrucke Grenzau, only 1 hour from Frankfurt, Germany, is the ultimate destination for table tennis training and vacation! Choose from weekend courses to one week courses or more! Packages include full room and board and twice daily table tennis training. The resort features a buffet comparable to a 4 star hotel bar night club indoor swimming pool full service sauna and gym with massage and private trainer services. For more information on prices please visit www.natabletennis.com/training. Prices start at $60/day!

Book your trip with NATT to get a special pre-trip information package that will give you all the detail information that will help you get the most out of your trip! Call us at 301-738-8250 or visit our website at www.natabletennis.com/training.

WWW.NATABLETENNIS.COM/TRAINING
Patsuma - Pips Out
Here's your pips-out weapon against the dynamic spin ball produced by newer, faster inverted rubbers. Patsuma has exceptional quickness with outstanding "knuckle" ball when blocking, and with powerful topspin ball and sharp smash. The secret of Patsuma lies in the shape, design and material of the pips. Patsuma start of a new pips-out generation! Sponge 1.0, 2.0, MAX. Item RSNA.

Nittoaku
3-Star Premium Balls
The highest grade Nittaku 3-star balls, made in Japan to higher specifications & quality material than any other ball! Item BNAP:
$6.25 for 3 balls / $11.95 for 6 balls / $22.95 for 12 balls
Premium Bulk Pack *189
(Bulk Pack comes as 10 doz. loose balls in bulk box. Includes 5% quantity discount for orders over $130.)

Sharaiden
Light, allround blade that gives superior control and feel. Five plies of wood. Very versatile for the allround player who wants to do it all. FL, ST, WT: 78 gms/Plies 5W/Blade only: $49.95. Item SNSh.

Refora
Maximizes the characteristics of Natural Rubber! With the highest grade of rubber, the rubber provides an ultra-controlled topspin, controlled slow shots, and pin-point control in a variety of shots. Sponge: 2.0, 2.2. Price: $34.95. Item: VR3SR. SPEED 8.0 / SPIN 9.5 / CONTROL 7.6 / POWER 9.3

ALL OF THESE PADDLE PALACE COMBO SPECIALS
INCLUDE BLADE + 2 SHEETS RUBBER FROM JOOLA, JUC, NITTAKU, STIGA, TIBHAR, YASAKA, OR STAG
(Note: extra charge for some rubbers)

WE WILL MATCH OUR COMPETITORS' PRICES!

5% Discount on orders over $130. Offers expire 2/8/07
TIBHAR

Samurai
Special!
Leap into the future with extraordinary playing characteristics through a newly developed chemical combining process. Natural and synthetic rubber combine for increased elasticity and durability. Great with speed glue.

Rapid and Rapid Soft: Best Selling Rubbers ON SPECIAL!
Vladimir Samsonov helped develop this rubber. Soft sponge evety elastic rubber provide speed, spin and lots of ball feel with optimum control. With or without speed glue, you get great results! Reg $9.95

3 NEW RUBBERS FROM TIBHAR

See the Tibhar ad in this magazine for more details!

TIBHAR:
Sponsor of the NCATT Champion Texas Wesleyan Table Tennis Team

2005 European Champion
Vladimir Samsonov uses Tibhar blades and rubber.

Paddle Palace 989-Deluxe Robot
FREE 12 DOZEN NITTAKU YOUNG STAR BALLS!!!
with purchase of 989-Deluxe Robot

Truly Deluxe! Great Advantages in SPIN Options!
Here is the Best Robot at the Best Price for the Advanced Player!

The 989-Deluxe is truly deluxe. This NEW Robot offers great advantages in SPIN settings. The main difference from the earlier 989 robot (and other robots) is that instead of one, there are two friction (ball throwing) wheels driven by two independently controlled motors. Each of the two friction wheels has its own control button at the player’s end of the table. The two independently programmable friction wheels make it possible to set the amount of spin of the ball separate from the speed setting. So you can set a great range of spins on the ball; from light to heavy topspin, underspin and sidespin. And you can also set it for no-spin (dead ball).

Features:
- Great new Spin Options for topspin, underspin, sidespin, and no-spin.
- Multiple Oscillation Options
- Very easy to set up and operate
- Very durable, made with high quality materials
- Ball Recycling and Net Collection System
- Rolls easily from table for easy storage
- No-Jam easy-feed engineering

$1,199.99
Item: OP900
Price includes shipping to contiguous U.S.A. with purchase of V989-Deluxe Robot!

Table Tennis Fascination II Book
FREE with purchase of V989-Deluxe Robot!

STIGA

NEW BLADES ON COMBO SPECIAL
STIGA Optimum PLUS
Combines Crystal Technology with Offensive Classic wood for a very fast, popular new blade. Same five pips as the best-selling STIGA Offensive Classic, but faster and lighter. Crystal Technology (CT), STIGA's unique process, hardens the blade surface, giving increased speed. You'll be amazed by the crystalline appearance of the blade and also the extra zip on your shots. Handle: FLUG (FLom), AN ST. Piles: SW: Wt: 80 gm. Item: XSSOPN. CLASS OFF/ SPEED 6G / CONTROL 68

Optimum Sync
Designed with the ideal mix of speed and control. Experienced players realize that they not only need lethal attacking shots, but be able to defend a counter. Topspin and underspin, sidespin, and no-spin. They not only need lethal attacking shots, but be able to defend a counter. Options: FLUG, FLom, AN ST. Piles: SW: Wt: 80 gm. Item: XSSOPN. CLASS OFF/ SPEED 8B / CONTROL 71

New Blades on Combo Special
STIGA Optimum Plus

NEW $114.95
Item: XSSOPN

New Blades on Combo Special
STIGA Optimum Plus

NEW $109.95
Item: XSSOPN

PADDLE PALACE: A U.S. COMPANY AND NORTH AMERICAN DISTRIBUTOR FOR STIGA PRODUCTS

Optimum MP - Smooth
MP and Nano Composite Technologies combined. 50-50 mixture of natural and synthetic rubbers produces more tension & spin. MP (Molecule Power) system increases energy release when you strike the ball. Nano-sized grains produce strong, tight bonds for greater dynamic effect. Great with regular glue or speed glue. Speed: 1.8, 2.0 MAX. Item: FSGMP. SPEED 9.4 / SPIN 8.6 / CONTROL 6.4 / POWER 9.4

Royal - Short Pips
STIGA's fastest pips-out rubber! Nano Composite technology in medium sponge with new mixing technique creates extremely small grains (50-100 nanometers) that result in strong, tight bonds. Despite the speed, you get great spin and control. Use with regular or speed glue. Speed: 1.5-2.0 MAX. Item: RSPD. SPEED 7.2 / SPIN 6.0 / CONTROL 8.9 / POWER 6.6

For 2007! Available Now!
Paddle Palace 989-Deluxe Robot
FREE 12 DOZEN NITTAKU YOUNG STAR BALLS!!! with purchase of 989-Deluxe Robot

TIBHAR

Rapid Soft: Amazing effect with speed glue Softer does not mean weaker. Strong, tight bonds. Despite the speed, you get great spin and control. Use with regular or speed glue. Speed: 1.8, 2.0 MAX. Item: RTRAP. SPEED 9.0 / SPIN 8.8 / CONTROL 7.6 / POWER 9.3

Rapid and Rapid Soft: Best Selling Rubbers ON SPECIAL!
Vladimir Samsonov helped develop this rubber. Soft sponge evety elastic rubber provide speed, spin and lots of ball feel with optimum control. With or without speed glue, you get great results! Reg $9.95

NEW $44.95
Item: RTRAP

Rapid and Rapid Soft: Best Selling Rubbers ON SPECIAL!
Vladimir Samsonov helped develop this rubber. Soft sponge evety elastic rubber provide speed, spin and lots of ball feel with optimum control. With or without speed glue, you get great results! Reg $9.95

NEW $24.95
Item: RTRAP

Rapid and Rapid Soft: Best Selling Rubbers ON SPECIAL!
Vladimir Samsonov helped develop this rubber. Soft sponge evety elastic rubber provide speed, spin and lots of ball feel with optimum control. With or without speed glue, you get great results! Reg $9.95

NEW $114.95
Item: XSSOPN

Rapid and Rapid Soft: Best Selling Rubbers ON SPECIAL!
Vladimir Samsonov helped develop this rubber. Soft sponge evety elastic rubber provide speed, spin and lots of ball feel with optimum control. With or without speed glue, you get great results! Reg $9.95

NEW $109.95
Item: XSSOPN

NEW Blades on Combo Special
STIGA Optimum Plus

Sponsor of the NCATT Champion Texas Wesleyan Table Tennis Team

PADDLE PALACE and STIGA: PROUD SPONSORS OF THE NEW USA TABLE TENNIS TEAM LEAGUE

EVERYTHING FOR THE TABLE TENNIS PLAYER!
President’s Report
By Sheri Soderberg Pittman

USATT is currently conducting an election to fulfill the following positions: Executive Vice President, Treasurer, and two Vice Presidents. The election was delayed this year because the Board was in the process of considering a sweeping proposal that the USOC had previously forwarded to all national governing bodies of Olympic sports. Sharing with you some of the philosophical and technical concerns will be the gist of this issue’s “association primer series.”

I believe that most Board members are amenable to adopting the general concepts that the USOC has outlined. There are a number of technical amendments needed to bring the document into conformity with our systems and procedures. Additionally, there are some philosophical issues to consider. This being an election year, a few Board members wanted to see an immediate dissolution of the Board.

The Board considered a motion and rejected it, as follows:

**Motion:**
Moved that the USATT By-Laws be amended to accomplish the following goals:

1. An entirely new USATT Board be elected for the 2006 elections based upon the recommendations of the USOC
2. Eliminate the position of President and have a Chair selected by the Board of Directors from the Independent Board Members every two years with a maximum of 2 year-two terms
3. Board members whose terms expire in 2008 will automatically be re-nominated by the Nominating Committee

**Motioner:** Robert Blackwell; Second: Barney Reed

**Closing date for voting:** Wednesday, September 20, 2006, Noon Mountain Time.

**Motion not passed:** 3-7-2-1

**In Favor:** Barney Reed, Robert Blackwell, Jing Wang

**Against:** George Brathwaite, Tong Lee, Khoa Nguyen, Sheri Pittman, Tim Boggan, Lily Yip, Dell Sweeris

**Abstain:** Ashu Jain, Joseph Wells; No vote: Whitney Ping

As you can see from above, I voted against the motion, as did a majority of the Board. I don’t presume to speak for the other Board members. I will, however, share with you my primary reasons for voting against the motion. First, I believe that disbanding the Board immediately would cause a great deal of chaos and disruption to the organization. USATT currently has a number of contractual and business relationships; when I contacted those entities to discuss what would have amounted to my immediate resignation, it was not well-received. Additionally, USATT is in the process of putting together a state association network, and that network will likely figure into future elections. It’s expected to be in place well before USATT’s next election cycle. USATT is also pursuing certain other quadrennial priorities and a clean sweep of the Board would disrupt the progress being made on those initiatives. Finally, individuals who were elected should serve out their terms according to the wishes expressed by the membership in 2004. Also, during my tenure as president, the Board had agreed, and so it became an established protocol, that in times of reform, terms of elected Board members would be respected.

Looking at the motion itself, there were three elements. In fact, I disagree with the premise of each of the three points.

On the first point, I will quote some of the feedback USATT received in August from Eric Parthen, the USOC’s Director of NGB Development.

- Regarding the immediate disbanding of the Board: “The current Board should not disband until the new governance model is in place.”
- Regarding a phased-in transition: “What’s most important is the process, and keeping members informed. If it takes two years to get all of the elements implemented, then it’s something you should consider to ensure USATT’s governance is as strong as it can be. There are advantages to clean sweep transition (new ideas, Board can develop its own identity, etc.) and there are advantages to a phased-in transition (retain some institutional knowledge, etc.). The Board should discuss and decide what is best for the organization.”
- On a “clean sweep” Board installation: “See above. This is the way the USOC prefers the reform but as previously stated, there are advantages to both and the Board should discuss.”

So I don’t agree that “an entirely new USATT Board be elected in 2006 based upon the recommendations of the USOC” is an accurate reflection of the feedback USATT received from the USOC.

The second point contained three ideas, 1) that the position of the president be eliminated and replaced simply by a Chairman of the Board (a USOC proposal); 2) that this position should be selected by the Board members and not the membership (a USOC proposal); and 3) that only one of the Independent Members could be selected (not within the USOC proposal). I believe that USATT members, who overwhelmingly supported the right of the membership to elect their leader of the Board in an election some years ago, should be apprised of the proposal and given a fair opportunity to provide feedback. Also, I don’t agree that only “Independent Directors” should be eligible to serve as the Chairman of the Board.

Finally, on the third point, I don’t believe that anyone should ever be “automatically” re-nominated. In fact, one of the most significant USOC Bylaw proposals would ensure more suitable and qualified Board members through an independent Nominating and Governance Committee that would be charged with finding, vetting and selecting candidates who possess specified attributes and qualifications to be a Board member. And this aspect of the motion did not follow the USOC’s excellent recommendation.

In the end, with the defeat of the motion and the passage of time, it became clear that there was only one way forward and that was to adhere as closely as possible to the provisions in our current Bylaws for the 2006 election.

As this magazine issue goes to press, the Board is voting on a couple of technical matters: 1) new language pertaining to logistics for the 2006 election and 2) a proposed 2-year length of office for those elected in 2006 in order to clear the way for a “clean sweep” Board installation in 2008.

Please take the time to participate in the election process. It’s one method, but not the only way, of communicating. To quote again from Eric Parthen, “While USATT’s members don’t necessarily have to approve the reform, they are the backbone of the association and it’s important to get their input, keep them informed, and engage them to be contributing members of your NGB.”

I look forward to moving ahead with USATT’s initiatives and Bylaws reform in accordance with USOC recommendations, membership feedback, and Board participation.

As always, I want to close with a note of appreciation to all of USATT’s staff and volunteers. I especially want to acknowledge Treasurer Tong Lee; I believe he is the only incumbent not seeking re-election. USATT is looking for regional coordinators for USATT’s Team League. Additional details for these openings are contained in this issue. Please consider getting more involved in USATT!
Executive Director’s Report

By Doru Gheorghe

By now all of you should have received the entry forms for the 2006 Nationals and we hope that many of you entered this great event. Please don’t forget to book your rooms at the Stratosphere Hotel in Las Vegas before Nov. 12, 2006 in order to take advantage of the special rate negotiated with the hotel. We hope to set a new entry record and wish all of you good luck.

Next year’s Pan Am Games will be held in Brazil, Rio de Janeiro on July 21-28, and the selection procedure is posted on our web page at www.usatt.org. We are looking for a location to hold the Pan Am Trials and we hope to have the date and location set by the end of this year. Keep an eye on our web page for details about the location, date and deadline to enter the Trials for the Pan Am Games. No entries will be allowed after the deadline. If you are not sure about your eligibility for the Pan Am Team Trials, please do not hesitate to contact me at ed@usatt.org and I’ll be glad to answer your questions.

The Junior Boys’ Team Trials will be held one day prior to the Pan Am Trials at the same location. Cadets are allowed to try out for the junior teams.

Our Junior and Cadet Team had a busy summer with a 14-day summer training camp held at Texas Wesleyan University, followed by a 14-day training camp in China at the Chinese National Training center and four days competing at the China Junior Open.

We would like to thank Lily Yip for making the arrangements and finding sponsors to fund part of our delegation for the training camp in China.

Olena Sowers, Ariel Hsing, Justen Yao and A.J Brewer represented North America at the World Cadet Challenge Cup held in Vrsac, Serbia and Montenegro on Oct. 25-29, 2006. The team participated in a five-day training camp prior to the competition together with Asia, Europe, and Oceania Teams.

Our Junior Boys’ Team qualified for the World Junior Championship to be held Dec. 10-17, 2006 in Cairo, Egypt.

This year’s U.S. Open was held in Charlotte and we would like to give many thanks to the local club for getting involved and help us organize this event. We must thank Tim Morgan with Visit Charlotte who made this event happen and did a great job in promoting the event on local television and media.

Charlotte and Ft. Lauderdale will not be available for next year’s U.S. Open and so we are in the process of finding another location. We hope to have the location and date by the end of this year. For those of you who wonder how we choose a location, there is a multi-step process and we consider several aspects before deciding, such as convention fees, hotel rates, union labor or extra costs associated with running the event, and location. The hotel rates have a major influence in our decision, as we always try to find the least expensive rates for our members.

If you are interested in holding the U.S. Open in your town, we would love for you to get involved and work with the local convention and visitor’s bureau and come up with a competitive bid.

USATT is happy to announce that we reached a partnership agreement with the National Senior Games Association (NSGA) and we will run recreational non-rating events for seniors at the Nationals and U.S. Open. At the request of NSGA, USATT will sanction all senior events run by NSGA. Ratings will not be processed for these events; they will be a way for our seniors to enjoy the game and win medals.

USATT is in the process of establishing a Veteran’s North American Championships for players over 30 years old. As soon as the details for this event will be set the info will be posted on our web page.

As always, if you have any suggestions or questions please do not hesitate to email me at: ed@usatt.org. Again, I wish all of you Good Luck at the upcoming U.S. Nationals!
An Official's View
By Wendell Dillon, Chair of USATT Officials Committee

Umpires really took it in the chops in the U.S. Open Issue. After reading Tim Boggs's article, which was properly labeled Senior Events and Umpiring, I thought it was time for a response.

I accept the validity of some of Tim's comments. An umpire should never brag about the number of faults called; that is inexcusable. Serves at the end of a game require extra attention by both the player and the umpire. The player can't get a free pass to serve illegally but the umpire should also give any benefit of doubt to the server.

The umpire cannot "let them play" because the players don't care. If an umpire is assigned to a match the umpire must enforce the rules. Enforcement should be consistent and I agree with Tim that we need to work on consistency.

The point penalty system (PPS) was adopted several years ago to control player misconduct. Before the PPS the referee had to accept poor behavior or default the player. The PPS has accomplished its purpose. Tim gave some good examples where the PPS should have been used.

Umpire evaluations. After 30 years with the international umpire program the ITTF decided it was time to improve umpire performance and consistency. The Umpires and Referees Committee (URC) has developed high standards for umpires working world title events. The program has been very successful in improving the quality of umpiring at the world championships. Like other sports, evaluation of umpires at the table is essential to improving performance. Unfortunately a few umpires improperly react by being exceptionally strict when being evaluated. I seriously doubt that any legal serve was faulted.

The most contentious element of a match is the serve. It seems that the ITTF changes the service rule more frequently than any other. The purpose of the changes is to ensure that the ball is served without imparting spin except by the racket and that the serve can be seen by the receiver.

At the world championships many players serve illegally until they are faulted. These world-class players want to get as much advantage as they can from the serve. Once the illegal serve is penalized, they correct it.

A problem in USATT is that many players don't have enough experience with umpires to develop consistently legal serves. Umpires need to work on consistency and players and coaches need to work on developing legal serves so they won't be surprised when they have an umpired match.

USATT Umpires Recertification Exams
By Wendell Dillon, Chair of USATT Officials Committee

All USATT umpires (not IU's) whose last exam was before 2006 must take and pass a recertification exam. Those not passing will be removed from the active list on April 1, 2007.

New Rates for umpire/referee exams in 2007:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current</th>
<th>New</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$10</td>
<td>$10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10</td>
<td>$15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$15</td>
<td>$20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$15</td>
<td>$25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20</td>
<td>$20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10</td>
<td>$10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10</td>
<td>$10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Senior Corner
By Olga and Stan Kahan, USATT Senior Committee Co-Chairs
949-830-6699 (phone) 949-240-7167 (fax)

Interesting news has arrived from central California, where well-known senior competitor Byng Forsberg, now a young 80 years of age, has challenged Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger to a game of table tennis. And we have learned that Arnold has accepted. It seems that Byng said he would play the "Governator" in Lodi, California, and contribute $100 to his campaign for re-election. The $100, however, will be donated to a cancer foundation, started by Forsberg's daughter.

At the moment we don't know if they will be playing an 11- or 21-point game, or whether long pips will be allowed. But Byng has told his friends privately, "If I lose, I'll be back!"

We would like to share another amazing story with our USATT Magazine readers. This story of Jude Balazy's Senior Handicap Tournaments has spread from Laguna Woods Village, California. For the last three years Balazy's Handicap Singles and Doubles tournaments have been attracting attention and enthusiasm from local senior member players every week on Thursdays and Saturdays.

In the 1960's, Jude Balazy played table tennis at UCLA as a student and at the Hollywood Table Tennis Club which then was run by Mila Boscar. Jude in his early 20's was a very familiar face among those table tennis players who went to China under "Ping-Pong Diplomacy," i.e. playing against Jack Howard, Glenn Cowan and others. Later on Balazy played his beloved table tennis only occasionally until he reached his 50's, resuming table tennis at various Senior Centers and clubs in Irvine, Costa Mesa, Laguna Beach, Anaheim, etc.

Despite his personal tragedy in recent years - open heart surgery for aortic valve replacement and later two cancer surgeries of tonsil and voice box removal - Jude created his own system for senior handicap tournaments which he has been directing personally. Jude's handicap tournaments - Singles and Doubles - are highly valued and appreciated by all those players who participate in his recreational events. Club members not only improved their level of play but some of them joined USATT and started playing regularly in various competitive tournaments on local, state, regional and national levels. Our deep gratitude to Jude Balazy for everlasting dedication to table tennis and the strong will to go ahead against all odds!

We are also glad to report on the news for recreational and competitive senior table tennis players. According to Dana Schnell, USA Table Tennis Programs Coordinator, USATT has officially partnered with National Senior games Association (NSGA) in order to sanction a recreational Masters program for Seniors at USA Open, Nationals, State and local tournaments, starting in 2007. Check her at programs@usatt.org for further information.

Remember - the older you get, the easier the competition becomes - or does it?

USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE • November/December 2006
MDTTC 18761-Q Frederick Rd., Gaithersburg, MD 20879 • (301) 519-8580 • www.mdttc.com

Butterfly Table Tennis Center

All Levels Welcome!

CHRISTMAS TRAINING CAMP DATES:

DECEMBER 26 - 31

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.*

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

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

Name: ___________________________ Phone: ___________________________ Age/DOB: ___________________________
Address: ___________________________ Rating: ___________________________
Amount Enclosed: $
As the summer comes to an end, a new school year begins along with a new season of the National Collegiate Table Tennis Association (NCTTA). However, this season looks to improve on previous ones, as the organization has grown even further to accommodate the rapid league expansion and development, and the rapid growing interest of table tennis in the United States.

With Texas Wesleyan University being a scholarship table tennis school, two new members to this year’s NCTTA may pose a threat towards Texas Wesleyan’s imposing lineup. Both the University of Puerto Rico Rio Piedras and Dalton College are also scholarship table tennis schools. With new players entering each of the NCTTA member schools, and with the new addition of two imposing collegiate table tennis schools, just maybe one team can upset the national title defender.

One of the major questions for the 2006-2007 season is, “who’s going to beat Texas Wesleyan University?” Featuring Olympic athlete Jasna Reed, and after winning three straight national NCTTA national championships, Texas Wesleyan University seems invincible to the college table tennis world. The NCTTA Spring 2006 Rankings (www.netta.org/2005-06/Spring2006Rankings.htm) had Texas Wesleyan University as the #1 school in the country, with combined rating points of 10,205 for their top four, more than 1500 points better than the second-ranked school, Princeton University. Texas Wesleyan University’s average player’s rating is close to 2552, theoretically placing all four starting players on the Top 25 Players in the United States list. With such a strong roster, which other collegiate team in the United States has a chance to compete?

With thirteen new schools from eight different divisions have joined the collegiate Table Tennis community. The following is a list of these new schools:

- University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras
- Eckerd College
- Darton College
- University of Nebraska-Omaha
- Wichita State
- University of Maryland, Baltimore County
- Gwynedd Mercy College
- Pacific Lutheran University
- Wooster College
- San Diego State
- University of California, Santa Barbara
- Rice University
- Texas A&M University
- Florida Division
- Florida Division
- Georgia Division
- Kansas Division
- Kansas Division
- Mid-Atlantic Division
- Mid-Atlantic Division
- Northwest Division
- Ohio Division
- SoCal Division
- SoCal Division
- Texas Division
- Texas Division

Welcome to all of you!

With a greater number of schools in each division, college table tennis expects to benefit greatly as the competition level deepens and diversifies. This means student athletes will face a broader diversity of styles, techniques, and skill levels in every division of NCTTA. The continued interest and growth of college table tennis level can only be seen as beneficial toward the further development of table tennis at all levels in this country.

A good example of the growing diversity is the University of Puerto Rico Rio Piedras, which will be joining the NCTTA as a team for the first time after participating only in singles and doubles events at last year’s National Championships. They were so mesmerized by the excitement of attending the national championships, Texas Wesleyan University seems invincible to the college table tennis world. The NCTTA Spring 2006 Rankings (www.netta.org/2005-06/Spring2006Rankings.htm) had Texas Wesleyan University as the #1 school in the country, with combined rating points of 10,205 for their top four, more than 1500 points better than the second-ranked school, Princeton University. Texas Wesleyan University’s average player’s rating is close to 2552, theoretically placing all four starting players on the Top 25 Players in the United States list. With such a strong roster, which other collegiate team in the United States has a chance to compete?

With Texas Wesleyan University being a scholarship table tennis school, two new members to this year’s NCTTA may pose a threat towards Texas Wesleyan’s imposing lineup. Both the University of Puerto Rico Rio Piedras and Dalton College are also scholarship table tennis schools. With new players entering each of the NCTTA member schools, and with the new addition of two imposing collegiate table tennis schools, just maybe one team can upset the national title defender.

NCTTA Committees

As the new season comes along, NCTTA has an updated list of committees and committee chairs as well as their contact information listed below. NCTTA is currently asking all interested volunteers to sign up for these committees and become involved towards enlarging the Table Tennis community in this country. The purpose of these committees is to act as a medium to work together with the rest of the Table Tennis family.

For example, the NCTTA Coaches Committee, new for this year, will be working to expand and formalize the contribution of table tennis coaches to college teams. It will also serve as a resource for coaches to provide input and feedback about NCTTA. If you’re interested in learning more about coaching at the college level, please contact the Coaches Committee Chair listed at the end of the article.

Here’s a list of the committees, their chairs, and contact information:

Media Relations Chair:
Mike McFarland marketing@nctta.org

Women in College Table Tennis Chair:
Tiger Ramankrishnan simhan99@hotmail.com

Marketing Chair:
Mike McFarland marketing@nctta.org

Ratings Chair:
Seeman Teotia ratings@nctta.org

Financial/Budget Chair:
David Del Vecchio treasurer@nctta.org

Alumni Development/Collegiate Relations Chair:
Vacant

Audit Discipline & Rules Chair:
Willy Leparulo president@nctta.org

Website Development Chair:
Wassim Chaq recruiting@nctta.org

Coach’s Committee Chair:
Mike McFarland marketing@nctta.org

World University Games Committee Chair:
Willy Leparulo president@nctta.org

Disabled Committee Chair:
David Del Vecchio treasurer@nctta.org
Letters To The Editor

Howards End (of the table, of course) Digesting Boggan’s Beef
Thoughts on bad umpiring and bad player behavior

Dear Editor,

It has been my observation that the vast majority of player/umpire confrontations have been over serves. Jack Howard pleads for an umpire mandate – mantra according to Tim – of providing an unobtrusive “level playing field.” I would agree, with the additional caveat, “while enforcing the rules of the sport.” This requires more than simply being a scorekeeper.

Regarding umpire exams (i.e. performance evaluations), the ITTF has initiated a program of training and certification of international umpires that includes the observation, by an evaluator, of the umpire’s performance at the table during a match. Admittedly, knowing that one is being watched creates a certain amount of stress that may sometimes influence behavior. Ideally, it should prompt the umpire to do better – not worse. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. Sadly, at the Charlotte U.S. Open, there were several incidents of bad umpiring and bad player behavior.

There is no easy solution to these problems. Certainly, the USATT Officials’ Committee and the ITTF Umpires & Referees’ Committee should encourage professionalism by match officials, while parents, coaches and players should incorporate proper observance of the rules and emotional control as an integral part of training from an early age as characteristics of good sportsmanship.

Sincerely,
Dick Evans, Hillsboro, WV
USATT International Umpire,
Administrator of The Dr. Michael J. Scott, Jr. Award for Excellence in Umpiring & The Swaythling Club International Sportsmanship Award

Dear Editor,

As a long-time reader of this magazine, I have seen many changes over the years. I would like to congratulate everyone involved for making the current format the best yet. Even after 30 years of play I am still trying to figure this game out; therefore, I especially enjoy the numerous coaching articles. I particularly look forward to Carl Danner’s Tips of the Month. Having often played at the same club as Carl, I have had the opportunity to time and again see him put these often subtle, but always effective tips into practice as he found numerous and never-ending ways to beat me. Please keep these tips coming, at least until I figure out how to beat him, which might still take awhile.

Sincerely,
Barry Tesar, Walnut Creek, CA

Dear Editor,

In rebuttal to the comments from Jack Howard and Tim Boggan in the last issue … having been an International Umpire for twenty years, I have noticed that U.S. players, by and large, ignore the changes to the service rules (about five changes in the last thirty years), and many umpires fail to enforce those changes for fear of alienating someone, or through their own apathy.

If player A goes to the trouble of adhering to the service rules, and player B does not, I’m sorry, but player B is cheating!!! And if the umpires do not enforce those rules, he should not be an umpire!!!

If the coaches do not go to the trouble of teaching a legal serve, he is derelict in his duty … and if the player, even if he spends ten hours a day practicing his loops, loop-drives, service returns, pushes and chops, cannot spend ten minutes learning legal serves … that player is lazy!!!

If you do not agree in following the rules established by the governing bodies, work to change them.

It is absolutely appalling the number of long-time players and upper-tier players who do not know many of the rules of the game … I advocate to my students that they actually take the umpire test … it is an open book test … if you can read, you can pass the test. Even if they never work as an umpire, they will know the rules, and cannot be taken advantage of by an opponent.

Sincerely,
Jerry Button, Greenwood, IN

---

America's First Table Tennis Store
Butterfly and Stiga's Longest Running Dealer since 1965
Riverchase Galleria Mall
Birmingham, Alabama • 205-987-2222 • 800-366-7664 • bumpernets.com
Mon-Thur, 10AM-9PM • Fri-Sat 10AM-10PM • Sunday Noon-6PM

BumperNets®

Store Offerings
★ Lessons with a Pro
★ Table rentals in the Store
★ Custom rackets & robots available
★ Ping Pong tournaments every Friday night

www.bumpernets.com

Holiday Specials
★ Butterfly Home Rollaway ………………… $269.99*
★ Butterfly Personal Rollaway ………………… $299.99*
★ Butterfly Playback Rollaway ………………… $339.99*
★ Stiga Master …………………………… $349.99*
★ Stiga Eurotech …………………………… $429.99*
★ Butterfly Premium ………………………… $469.99*
★ Call for great shipping prices
★ Most tables are in stock and shipped next day
★ Call for mall specials on robots and accessories
*Plus shipping Prices good til 12/31/06

Check our Tournament Blogs!

USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE • November/December 2006
Here are the results for the “Best Excuses” contest! These are the ones I judged the best in some way—whether funny, creative, strange, or simply bizarre. There were about 150 “excuses” sent in by 37 people. We start off with our “Grand Champion,” then the few category champions, and then the honorable mentions alphabetically by the contributors (including my own contributions, which alas were not eligible for a prize).

GRAND CHAMPION EXCUSE
Andrew Gooding, Huntington, WV
Say this entire excuse on one breath!

“The reason I lost is because I didn’t warm up properly because I was up late last night finishing the doubles match and then we had to go out to eat at 11 pm and the only place that was open was a Chinese buffet that had the slowest service on earth, and they wouldn’t let us carry stuff out so we’re sitting there for what seemed like forever and then I didn’t get back to the motel until after I and my roommate had the TV on, so I didn’t wake up when my alarm went off and we were late getting to the venue as the fool turned the wrong way out of the motel parking lot and we went the wrong way halfway across town on a Sunday morning until we found a gas station to get directions and my first match was at 9 am and I was like ‘oh, $#@& and I started gluing in the car, but he said, ‘No, it will stink the place up.’ I and my roommate had the TV on, so I didn’t wake up when my alarm went off and we were late getting to the venue as the fool turned the wrong way out of the motel parking lot and we went the wrong way halfway across town on a Sunday morning. Then we found a gas station to get directions and there for what seemed like forever and then I didn’t get back to the motel until after I and my roommate had the TV on, so I didn’t wake up when my alarm went off and we were late getting to the venue as the fool turned the wrong way out of the motel parking lot and we went the wrong way halfway across town on a Sunday morning until we found a gas station to get directions and my first match was at 9 am and I was like ‘oh, $#@& and I started gluing in the car, but he said, ‘No, it will stink the place up.’

STRANGEST EXCUSE
Tahl Leibovitz, Ozone Park, NY
“Playing Table Tennis is not like collecting fish. These are two different things and collecting fish is much easier.” (Tahl said someone actually said this after losing a match!)

FUNNIEST EXCUSE
Robert Palgon, Fremont, CA
Your call for excuses for losing a table tennis match reminded me of one weekend in February, 1965 when I and another Riverside Table Tennis habitué named Sol Hyman – but better known among his friends as Genghis Khan, left Reisman’s basement, boarded a Greyhound bus, and made our way to Philadelphia to play in a one-star tournament there. In Genghis’ very first match, in the lowest category event, Genghis was beaten 21-2, 21-1. When I asked him how he accounted for his very lopsided defeat, he took me aside and explained it thusly: “Bob, the conditions were maddening. The lighting was simply terrible, really...the net wasn’t even green – and it sagged too much in the middle. The floor was more slippery than ever and I lost all my footing. The only reason you beat me was because my opponent was a lefty and I couldn’t use my best serves while an umpire was watching.”

BEST “Duh!” EXCUSE
Gary Covington, Blacksburg, VA
One of the best players in the club, Tejas Bhujle (rated 1826), had just won a match 3-0 handle against an up-and-coming player (rated about 1300). After the match concluded the loser walked over to Tejas and said “Boy, if it was not for your backhand, I would have won.” Tejas is well known for his tremendous backhand and only looked at me in disbelief. We still bring up this excuse every time Tejas handily wins a match.

MOST HONEST EXCUSE
Robert Trudell, Mesa, AZ
“I couldn’t use my best serves while an umpire was watching.”

HONORABLE MENTIONS
Ann Alvarez, East Brunswick, NJ
During a break in a tough table tennis match, I was hot and sweaty, and tried to cool myself off by putting water on my hands and face. I then dried my hands and picked up my paddle again to play. My excuse is that my dry right hand stuck to the racquet, and caused me to lose the match. I blamed my loss on the fact that I washed away the perspiration that was on my hand before the break. The perspiration had given me the perfect slippage between hand and racquet, and therefore, I lost what maneuverability I needed to win the game. The fact that my opponent was Judy Hugh had nothing to do with it.

Larry Bavy, Somerset, NJ
I lost 3-2 in the round of 16 to Jose Miguel Ramirez Marin of Guatemala (world #427, USATT rated 2485) with a blown first game where I was up 10-8 and serving. I wasn’t used to my opponent having four names.

“We won because you couldn’t return your serves. How often have we heard this one?”

Jean-Hugó Drouillet, Pittsburgh, PA
“Scott Gordon is a 2000 mph speed player. You play with improper technique and deficient footwork, that’s the only reason why you could beat me.”

John Franievich, San Francisco, CA
“I would have won but my new transition lens didn’t lighten-up enough when I came into the club.”

“I would have won but I think my wife put paint thinner in my speed glue. She wanted me to stay home and paint the bathroom.”

“I couldn’t concentrate on the match because my favorite uncle told me that he was going hunting with Dick Cheney this morning.”

Scott Gordon, Sacramento, CA
“There’s something wrong with the air.”

“The light is too good.”
Larry Hodges, Germantown, MD
“You only won because you played me different than you do in practice!” Told to me by a member of my club who reminded me that he’d beaten me 14 times in a row in practice before losing the tournament match. Wonder why I changed tactics?
“If I hadn’t played so poorly, I’d have gotten twice as many points!” Told to me by an opponent who I’d just beaten 21-1.
“If you played my forehand more, I’d have beaten you.”

Clark Kurtz, Canandaigua, NY
“Tal’s naturally left-handed. I should never have taken up playing right-handed.”

Kagin Lee, Chicago, IL
“My coach was distracting me with his hand signals.”

Tahl Leibovitz, Ozone Park, NY
After traveling six hours to a Spin Tech Tournament and losing every match, a player said, “I didn’t want to play anyway; I was just doing the tournament director a favor.”
“The reason I didn’t play well is because the table was next to a swimming pool.”
“I was smashing my head against the wall after being down 2 games; so I lost my concentration.”
“I only play well against world-class players and on the red mat, that’s why I lost.” Excuse by a player after losing to a top junior player.

Erik Mulder, Groningen, The Netherlands
“I lost because your loop has no spin.”

Pongrunner (screen name at about.com)
Okay, a real excuse from just last Tuesday. A player claimed she lost a league match because the club had reorganized its lockers and hers was no longer in the same place...

Diego Schaaf, Pasadena, CA
“If you hadn’t polished your head just prior to our match, I might have been able to see the ball past the glare coming off your dome.”

John Stuckey, Roscoe, IL
“No one explained to Natalia (11 years old, rated 1034) that she was supposed to lose to me (50 years experience, rated 1222).”
“He could see over the table.” (Wesley Chang beat me when he was 9)
“My legs cramped, and my IcyHot was at home.”
“I felt sorry for my son.” (David rated 1332)

ThunderFl (screen name at about.com)
“I can only play against good players, I lost to you only because you can’t play.”

Tinykin (screen name at about.com)
“My pants were too tight”

Robert Trudell, Mesa, AZ
“I used this match to warm-up for the Championship I wanted to win.”
“I kept wondering if I could’ve played better with the other blade.”
“I haven’t had enough time to break this rubber in.”
“I felt pressured to do well after all that coaching.”
“I was practicing some new shots.”
“If I win all the time nobody will enter this event.”
“I am trying to teach my son that winning isn’t everything.”

“Ping Pong. Undertaking refined, visually guided movement behaviors that challenge the brain is another good form of exercise. Together with improved hand control, faster and more successful responses indicate positive changes in the brain.” From positonscience.com, Nov/Dec 2005 among examples of excellent activities to promote brain health. Contributed by John Jarema.


Primal Scream frontman Bobby Gillespie blames former cocaine dependency on table tennis addiction
“I used to do loads of cocaine. Me and my mates used to get snuffed up and play table tennis at my house. That’s the way to do it. Put lines on the table and then you can do those Japanese topspin and back spins right. Cocaine and table tennis – it’s a great recreational activity. That’s when I’m at my best.” From gigwise.com, July 30, 2006. Contributed by Robert Trudell.

Ping-Pong Diplomacy?
“I spent a lot of hours in the game room,” said Sen. Norm Coleman (MN) of his ping-pong game. And so it was natural for him to ask, during an official trip to China, if he could play some ping-pong. He thought they were going to just meet at like a Boys or Girls Club and play with a couple of kids. “Instead, I walk into the National People’s Congress building, and they’ve got this table set up and some former world champions to play! Clearly the Chinese thought ahead of us.” He ended up playing a number of Chinese officials, including President Hu Jintao. “It created a little bond, a little relationship there,” said Coleman. “I told President Hu that I will be working on my game for our next interparliamentary visit to China in two years. Let’s just say the Olympians won’t be the only ones competing in Beijing in 2008.” Info from usnews.com, Aug. 28, 2006.
The Provo-Orem Tournament of Champions (POTOC) is working proof that you don’t need eight tables and an NBA-sized gymnasium to have competitive table tennis play. Organized three years ago, POTOC was without a table, but not without passion for the game. We had four athletes play in our first league match at a local college (Utah Valley State). The results of that match were never recorded, and it was three years later that the first recorded match was played.

We have recently picked up several members, a decent table and a dedicated place to play. We do not have high ceilings or copious amounts of space at either end of the table, but we have enough to make for some serious matches. We are all fairly new to this sport competitively, but have been involved in it casually for many years. Most of us had never played a match with a rating on the line and it has made for very interesting play. Add the element of standings among friends, and it gets very competitive in a hurry. Atop our standings currently is Jeff Stiles, whose unique grip and unyielding consistency is difficult to overcome. Next is Erich Ficker (author), followed by Devan Stiles and Garrett Stiles. Dallin Stiles is currently in a trailing position, but is working hard to make that old news. Two members who recently joined, Craig Cannon and Taylor Ainge, have proven to be worthy opponents.

We play almost every night around nine or ten (the size of our league allows for some serious flexibility) in Provo, UT, just north of BYU’s Lavell Edward’s stadium. We welcome any and all that would like to join in the fun and experience table tennis the way it was intended, fun and competitive. You can contact us at www.usatt.org/league, click on singles league. We are currently the only league in the state of Utah.
Training in Romania

Training Camp Sponsored by ITTF Butterfly Scholarship

This summer I went to Romania for training with some of the best in the world juniors. The training was amazing and I was very impressed with the coaches and practice partners.

The city where I spent three weeks, Constanta, is very much like my hometown, Odessa. I trained at the sport school which includes other sports such as tennis, swimming, and weightlifting. If I had the chance, I would love to go back and train more in Romania, not just because the place itself is so great, but because the table tennis training is outstanding.

The club where I trained has a serious attitude toward table tennis and juniors who play there know what they are doing and are amazing at it. Everybody practices very hard and the results show when juniors like Elisabetha Samara win at the Junior Circuits.

My daily training started with stretching, followed by a thirty-minute warm-up on the table at eight in the morning. I worked on improving my game closer to the table, looping, and short game. The morning practice lasted about two hours and twenty minutes. After morning practice we ran about ten laps and did some physical training. During the break, I spent my time hanging around with the girls and at the beach. Afternoon practice started much alike the morning practice, but we worked more on footwork and serving. The second Sunday in Romania we ran four kilometers for experience and physical training. Everybody from the club ran and many others. Afterwards we spent the rest of the day on the beach together.

The training center has many amazing players and coaches. People are very kind and friendly and always ready to help. The players speak English, and help out if they see any mistakes one is making.

Overall, the training in Romania was a wonderful experience, and if given the chance there is no doubt I will do it again. The coaching is great, practice partners are some of the best in the world, and the food is tasty. I am very thankful to Butterfly, Emilia Gheorghe, and in general everybody who made this trip happen as well the coaches who spent their time working with me.

2006 USA World Disabled Team Trains in Portland

Article & Photo By Coach Sean O’Neill

The U.S. World Disabled Table Tennis Team just finished a highly successful training camp in Portland, OR. Led by Head Coach Sean O’Neill (’88 & ‘92 Olympian), the team of Ed Levy, Norm Bass, Tahl Leibovitz and Andre Scott worked out in the Rose City for one week in preparation of the 2006 World Championships to be held in Montreux, Switzerland in September. Team members Mitch Seidenfield and Bob Bowlander were unable to attend.

Oregon Sports Action, the regional Olympic Alumni Association led by Jack Elder (1972 Olympian) provided financial support for local facility use at the Waldorf School in Portland where the camp took place. Local champion Whitney Ping (2004 Olympian) joined in the training for two days at the Waldorf School.

The World Team also had a chance to compete with members of the Portland Table Tennis Club at Tualatin Hills Recreation Center in a friendly match. Final Score: Portland All-Stars 5 - Team USA 4.

Following the camp the team participated in the 2006 German Open in Wuppertal, Germany. 2004 Paralympic Bronze Medalist Tahl Leibovitz led the team with Gold medals in Open Standing Singles and Class 9 Singles. Team USA took fourth in the Class 7 Team event after beating England 3-2 in the quarterfinals.

The team would like to thank Oregon Sports Actions, Waldorf School, Oregon Table Tennis, Portland Table Tennis, Ping-Pong.com, and Powerbar for their contributions during the camp.
Counterlooping is used increasingly as a player develops and involves heavy topspin against an opponent's heavy topspin ball. Counterloops can be played away from the table as the ball is falling, close to the table ("off the bounce"), or at the top of the bounce.

Preparation

From a position with the left foot forward for right-handers, the hips, waist and shoulders all rotate to the right, bringing the weight onto the right leg. The arm is brought back and lowered below the contact point, though higher and more closed than for topspin against backspin defense.

Swing - Contact

The arm moves forward and upward, though in a more horizontal arc than for topspin against a backspin. Contact is beside the body at hip height with the racket closed.

Follow Through

The weight transfer to the left leg is completed as the body rotates to the left. The racket finishes high with the arm in a 90°-90° position (90° at the elbow, 90° between upper arm and body).

McAfee’s Mechanics: Simple Fixes to Common Problems

Articles & Photos By: Richard McAfee, USATT National Coach & USATT Hall of Famer

As a professional coach, I see a number of technical problems over and over again. Here are some simple fixes for five of the most common problems.

Problem: Do you have trouble reaching fast balls to your wide forehand?
Answer: You may be standing too close to the table or not recovering back into the proper ready position between strokes. When a ball comes fast to your wide forehand, often there is only time to take one wide step with the right foot (right-handed players) to reach the ball. This type of one-step footwork works well when you can simply redirect your opponent’s speed back at him. If you are too close to the table, you will find the wide ball gets behind you. If you are back a little more, you can step in and play this ball correctly in front of you. Of course, against a slower return, you should always move both feet a little more back so that you can generate full power on the slower ball.

Problem: Do you have problems controlling the angle of your racket during returns?
Answer: Check out your grip. If you are using a “low” grip, one that grips down on the handle, this may be your problem. Try moving your grip up more towards the blade as this will help stabilize the wrist and help you control the blade. You always want to feel like you are holding the blade and not the handle of the racket.

Problem: Do you often feel like your feet are slipping out from under you?
Answer: Many players simply do not know how to actually put their feet on the ground properly. Imagine that you are making a “fist” out of your toes and the ball of the foot and place the “fist” on the floor. You want to have your body weight resting on a small area of the foot for maximum traction and movement. If you distribute your weight over the entire foot you have much less traction. This concept will really help your movement, even on a slick floor (concrete).
Here's a sponge rubber story. In late August of 1955, I played a tournament at Buckeye Lake, Ohio, and was seeded second in the juniors behind the national boys' champion David Krizman, of South Bend. My semifinal opponent was New Yorker Barry Michelman and I was certainly not concerned because I had beaten him three straight under ten (games to 21) at the Nationals. It didn't take me long to see the error in my thinking. Barry was playing with that strange new kind of paddle ... sponge rubber! (Introduced to the world in 1952 by Japan's Hiroje Satoh) I couldn't believe it! I couldn't hit the ball straight. One ball went into the net of the bottom of the net, the next went straight up into orbit! Everything I had learned for ten years was wiped out by one stupid *!@#?! Paddle!!

Immediately after the match my five dollar (that was very expensive in 1955) MacCrossen paddle was dispatched to, and still resides at the bottom of Buckeye Lake.

When I returned home I informed my parents that my table tennis career was over ... fini ... kaput! I certainly had no desire to be embarrassed by some stupid Ping-Pong Paddle. I could still compete in golf, bowling, softball, volleyball, horseshoes, swimming, etc., etc. My mother reminded me that I already had nonrefundable airplane tickets and hotel reservations to Toronto for the upcoming Canadian and International Open. Oh well, what's one more tournament? I always loved Toronto and the Canadian National Exposition ... the roller coaster ... the strip shows with no I.D. needed ... dinner on Yonge Street ... the gorgeous girls from Montreal. So I get beat! So what?

The night before the tournament I was practicing (for what?) at the Toronto Table Tennis Club when Ken Kasten came up to my table and asked me to try a new paddle. For those of you who are not familiar with table tennis lore, Milwaukee's Ken Kasten was the owner of the MacCrossen table tennis company, and personally made the premier paddles in America. (With apologies to Hall of Famer Bernie Hock.) Ken had made a paddle for me using the exact blade and handle I normally used, but instead of Leland (hard) rubber, he put two pieces of thick hard sponge rubber on an imported finished birch blade. Laughingly I tried this "thing" and incredibly, within ten minutes my sponge game was identical to my hard rubber game! The difference? Your game was ten points worse!

My matches at the Canadians were a revelation. I absolutely slaughtered a long list of hapless opponents, including U.S. Open Junior runner-up Roger Desormeau, and Canadian Men's Champion Paul Belanger. Belanger, after missing five straight serves, had to be physically restrained by a teammate before he agreed to continue.

Unfortunately, soon to be world champion Erwin Klein of Los Angeles, a far better player than I, had also switched to this ridiculous rubber, and in addition to sabotaging his opponent's game, his own game was vastly improved ... and he demolished me in the men's quarters, destroyed me in the junior finals, and with his partner Bernie Bukiet, crushed me in the doubles semis, where I played with his beardness, Tim Boggan.

For a while sponge rubber was the 800-pound gorilla at tournaments, allowing a handful of "fair" players to play havoc with America's best, until almost everyone switched! (Dr. Richard Puls ... Jim Tancill ... Eddie Record ... Dr. Andreas Gal ... Barry Michelman ... and, of course ... me!)

---

**TIP OF THE MONTH: November**

**Back and Through**

By Carl Danner

For most strokes and all offensive shots (loops, hits, counters, etc.), you should not start your backswing until you are ready to follow through immediately into the ball. Think of it as a one-piece motion, and take advantage (on harder shots) of the muscle resistance you build up as your backswing reaches its natural limit. By rebounding immediately forward towards the ball, you allow that resistance to provide added force for the stroke, and create other potential benefits of timing and full-body coordination.

For those who also play tennis, this is exactly the opposite of what's taught there (where early racket preparation is emphasized). Keep your table tennis strokes as a continuous motion and you'll perform better on our smaller, quicker court.

---

**TIP OF THE MONTH: December**

**When Seedings Fail**

By Carl Danner

After several rounds in a tournament, seedings and ratings don't mean much -- especially at lower rating levels, where players can improve rapidly. Players who have won three or four rounds are clearly playing well, regardless of their prior records. The same probably holds true for you, if you have advanced that far. So ignore your next opponent's rating and seeding, and focus instead on his or her style and what tactics you need for the match.
From the beginning, Laci, incomparable on-court showman that he was, had a serious side. He wanted to be proud of the Sport he was going to give his life to. As a young man he got into table tennis rather than swimming because he said the prizes were better; and when, in 1928 at Stockholm, Fred Perry, World Champ to be, fell and twisted his ankle and the sympathetic audience applauded, Laci's wry take was that "everybody was glad that table tennis was shown to be a sport you can get insured in."

As a boy forming his own maddeningly deceptive game, especially his indescribable forehand-backhand that angled you to death or ferociously put away, er, oh, oh, dropped beautifully controlled shots, Laci laid claim to being a sleight-of-hand artist. But it wasn't only for his superb play as a three-time World Singles finalist, World Mixed Doubles Champion, and two-time U.S. Open titleholder that U.S. World Women's Singles Champion Ruth Aarons called him "the one player worthy of that extravagant word 'genius'; it was also his exhibition repertoire—his vaudeville juggling, blowing, stroking, kicking the ball—that had audiences everywhere laughing and, more, marveling. When you watched him standing on his hands, playing the ball with the bat in his teeth, you thought for sure he's gonna end this routine by becoming the diving instructor he once was and do a back flip off the table.

Laci's great rival was Victor Barna who knew Bellak's game from boyhood and invariably got the better of him. Off court too. Once in India putting on exhibitions, Laci and "Viki" were staying one night under very crude conditions. It was necessary that Laci, and "Viki" were staying one night under very crude conditions. It was necessary that Laci, himself up. Barna asked him for directions to this pit. Without warning Victor, Laci told him, "Just follow the path." Barna left, returned—and said he almost fell into the s-t-pit. Laci ended this story by shaking his head and saying, "Victor always was lucky."

But Bellak greatly admired Barna. No more so than on one particular night when they were invited for dinner at a rich man's house. Laci said that as soon as they entered, the host asked us if we wished to play table tennis before or after eating (play for our supper, so to speak). Whereupon Victor replied without hesitation that they had just come to say, "Sorry, but we can't stay," and walked right out. Bellak loved him for that.

Proud, then, Laci was. But in that elfishly-charming, self-aggrandizing/self-deprecatory way, his entrance line, "I am the Greatest" was touched with irony. Laci's lifelong friend Sandor Glancz tells the story of his roommate Bellak talking in his sleep. "Captain," Laci was saying, "who is the greatest player you ever had on your Team?"

After a pause, Bellak said, "Thank you. Captain." I like to think, unbeknownst to Sandor, Laci had one eye open, one impishly closed in a wink.

Of course Laci was famous enough to draw movie director Michael Curtiz's attention. "What's the name of that Hungarian ping-pong player?" Curtiz had asked. In "Casablanca" he named the Paul Henreid character, Victor Laszlo, after Bellak.

In the many enjoyable years that I knew the aging Laci, it was really his upbeat attitude, his good humor, his quips and stories, rather than his play that drew me to him—and this despite the fact that he would tell the same jokes, the same anecdotes over and over again. But withal you saw his child's delight in telling them, his zest for life, and so you'd take such pleasure in his pleasure, in his humanity really, that they'd disarm you every time. At an "old boys" reunion at Dick Miles's house, my wife and I heard the line we'll always associate with Laci's beloved wife Lilly. "Laci," she said, more plaintively than playfully, "tell me a story you haven't told me before?"

I'm going to end this all-too-brief Remembrance with my favorite Bellak story—one that so poignantly humanizes him. Laci was living in Paris, in a little apartment next to the Moulin Rouge, and was giving an occasional table tennis lesson to a millionaire (one lesson equaled two weeks average pay). He was also spending some time playing bridge with this millionaire, the millionaire's wife and her boy friend.

"How'd you like to go to Biarritz for a while?" said Mr. Millions to Laci one day when Laci had all of $5 in his pocket. Why not?

Laci, uneasy were such a personage to come knocking on his humble door, waited outside to be picked up at the Place Pigalle, and from the start had a great time: was wined and dined, given pocket money to gamble with, was recognized by one and all as a man of considerable means—a millionaire by association.

But just about the time Laci was getting used to the good life, to what it was like having money, it was time to go back to Paris, to the Place Pigalle, where waving goodbye to his friends, he reflected with Chaplinesque ruefulness that, well, he still had that $5 in his pocket.
In Memoriam: Laszlo “Laci” Bellak (1911-2006)

Farewell to the Clown Prince of Table Tennis

Article & Photo By: Ian Marshall, ITTF Publications Editor

It is with great sadness that the death of Laszlo Bellak is announced. He died peacefully in his sleep at his home in Miami, Florida in the early hours of Wednesday Sept. 20, 2006. He was ninety-five years old.

At his prime in the late 1920s and 1930s, he was the “Clown Prince of Table Tennis.” He was the entertainer, the showman, the man the crowd loved to watch, the man who injected fun into the contest and a man who played a major role in furthering the sport.

Alongside compatriots Victor Barna and Miklos Szabados he was one of the “Three Musketeers,” the trio who promoted table tennis worldwide in its pioneering days.

International Duty
Laszlo Bellak represented Hungary from 1928 to 1938 before moving to live in the United States when conflict broke out in Europe.

He represented Hungary 59 times in international competition; at the World Championships he won 21 medals (seven gold, nine silver, five bronze) but the biggest prize of all eluded him. He never won the St. Bride Vase, the trophy awarded to the winner of Men’s Singles.

Introduction to Table Tennis
Table tennis started for Laszlo Bellak on his thirteenth birthday, by modern day standards he began late but matters must be put into context: he became a teenager on Feb. 12, 1924, a time when the concept of a World Table Tennis Championships had not even reached the drawing board.

Like many who were to follow, his introduction was on the dining room table; it was a time when many Hungarians were fascinated by the game, it was a growth time. Table tennis was being played in cafés and similar places throughout Hungary and Laszlo Bellak was smitten by the sport, by 1926 he was one of the country’s top players.

Not Selected
However, when the first World Championships were staged in London in 1926, Bellak was not selected; he was considered to be too young. A disappointment but two years later he was a member of the 1928 team that played in Stockholm and he made what was to be one of the all-time incredible debuts in the prestigious event.

Not only was he a vital member of the team that captured the Swaythling Cup, he reached the final of the Men’s Singles event and came within a hair’s breadth of winning. In fact he was destined never to come closer.

Men’s Singles Runner-Up
In the final, against compatriot, Zoltan Mechlovits, he led by two games to nil and 20-17; he had three match points, three championship points. Mechlovits, 37 years old, was the more experienced player; he had reached the final two years earlier at the inaugural event, losing to Roland Jacobi, also of Hungary.

Bellak took risks. They cost him dearly; they were risks that he would rue for the rest of his life. Mechlovits won 8-21,18-21, 24-22,21-12, 21-15.

In 1930 in Berlin and in 1933 in Paris he reached the Men’s Singles final; on both occasions he lost, on both occasions the tactical skills of Victor Barna prevailed; Laszlo Bellak was destined to be the nearly man.

Golden Farewell
He never reached the Men’s Singles final again but in 1938, on his farewell appearance for Hungary in the World Championships, he did depart with gold.

The event was played in London, a local girl Wendy Woodhead needed a Mixed Doubles partner; she was paired with Laszlo Bellak. Incredibly they won the title even though they had never partnered each other before!

Atlantic Crossing
Soon after his success in London, he moved to the United States; during the Second World War he spent five years in the United States Army, serving principally in India and Burma.

When the war was over, he became a lithographer and formed his own company, Bellak Color Corporation.

Returned to Hungary
With five national titles but never men’s singles champion, he returned to his native Hungary in 1994 for what was to prove the last time. It was the occasion of the seventieth anniversary celebrations of the Hungarian Table Tennis Association. He played the late Ferenc Sido, a match that delighted those present.

It was a night to remember, one that will never be forgotten and the table tennis world will always remember Laszlo Bellak. He was the “enfant terrible,” the Joker but above all else he earned the right to the title of “Table Tennis Legend.”

He was a character; sports needs characters. He injected life into his play and table tennis is richer for his contribution.

He is sadly missed; our condolences to his friends and family.
In Memoriam: Derek Wall (1930-2006)

Article & Photo By: Tim Boggan, USATT Historian

One of the most traveled North American Internationals in our History was my longtime friend, doubles partner, and rival, Derek Wall, who died Sept. 12 at St. Michael’s Hospital in Toronto of lung cancer, his family by his side. Surviving him are his three daughters, Angela, Sharon, Lynette, son Gary, six grandchildren, and one great grandson.

From 1955 through 1958 Derek could lay claim to being the best player in South Africa. Then, after moving to England, where in the 1960’s he won Doubles tournaments in the North and West, he immigrated to Toronto, soon became the Canadian National Singles Champion, and for years toured the country as Player and pre-eminent Coach while also of course competing in U.S. tournaments, often gristly pulling out match after match.

One true-grit fight he didn’t win I well remember. At Charlie Disney’s June, 1972 $8,000 Minnesota Classic, against a younger, physically much stronger opponent, the London-based Jamaican Les Haslam, Derek was down 2-0, then, with some chance, clutch backhand picks, he 18, 19 rallied — only to lose 19 in the 5th. Seeing Wall’s ever-receding face as the match progressed, and knowing that he liked a drink, or two, or three, I thought of Shakespeare’s middle-aged Antony’s great line to Cleopatra: how he’ll “Force the wine peep through their sears.” Meaning how he’ll revell his soldiers into life, into a battle unto death: how he’ll raise their spirits, make the blood course through their veins, whatever wine, whatever blood is sure to spill. At that moment I thought of Derek as heroic.

Wall was a great storyteller, and naturally some of his shared reminiscences dealt with his formative years. I remember shortly after meeting him being in his apartment and hearing him say, “Have another rum, Tim. There’s still a box of photos and clippings from the ’50s I don’t think you’ve seen yet.” In addition to the two official languages of South Africa, English and Afrikaans (“Kitchen Dutch” — that is, inferior Dutch), Derek spoke a smattering of Swahili, Zulu, and Xosa.

In 1959, moving from Southern to Northern Rhodesia, he stayed the night at Tunduma. Fell asleep under his white mosquito netting (it was hot, hot, hot) with the door open and the reading light on. Sometime later, he awoke, in a dream, as if blind to reality. Yes, he could eerily make out the light was still on, but why was it so dark? And then he realized that his white mosquito netting was no longer white but black — swarming with bugs.

As Derek was the kind of person who watched Hitchcock’s “The Birds” with half a hand over his face, or once came up out of a London tube into Trafalgar Square, only to have the pigeons drive him underground again, you can imagine the horror at this net that was blanketing him. “I have to get out of here!” he yelled, and closed-mouthed threw open the net and ran for his psychic life to another room.

In Dar es Salaam — “the heaven of peace” (Why is it called that? Because it’s the only place on the East Coast of Africa where there are no sharks inland) — Derek coached the Tanzanian Team. Began by sitting in a chair — a throne chair, as it were — and beating all corners. “Oh?” I said. “How’d they take to that?”

“Listen,” he said, “I was a table tennis STAR, man. I was always treated very well by the blacks. If they’d have had too much pride, they wouldn’t have played me while I was sitting in that chair.”

After 3 months in Tanzania, Derek moved on for a month to coach the Kenyan Team both in Mombasa and Nairobi. After that he was off to Cairo and Tunis.

By 1960 Africa was 30 years behind him — he would never return. He arrived in London — “All the good players knew I was coming” (Modesty was never one of Derek’s recognizable traits) — and for half a dozen years he played in Europe, mostly in England, representing that country in Singles at the 1963 Prague World’s.

In 1964, Derek began the first of his two Globetrotter tours with 4-time World Champion Richard Bergmann. “Derek’s the best exhibition partner I ever had,” Derek said Richard said. Bergmann really won Wall’s admiration — and it wasn’t just because Richard once told Derek in South Africa that he judged him, with his hard bat prowess, to be World #5. “Richard would put everything he had into our half-time act. Afterwards, sometimes, he’d literally be sick, would puke in the privacy of our dressing room.”

In 1967, Derek was at the World’s in Stockholm, in ’69 at Munich, in ’71 at Nagoya and on into China (where, yeah, yeah, there was the Great Wall); in ’73 he was at Sarajevo, in ’75 at Calcutta, in ’77 at Birmingham. Along the way, he won 3 Canadian National Singles Championships (’68, ’70, ’71) — his first at age 39 — and 7 Canadian National Doubles Championships — the last in his 50th year. At this time in his life, he not only played table tennis but golf and squash, and prided himself on keeping fit.

Derek was a proud man, and I liked him for it. He carried himself well, and had a great sense of humor. One night in Detroit — it may have been after he, Peter Gonda, and rival Canadian Champions Larry Lee and Errol Caetano had won the U.S. Open Team Championships — I was at an all-night pharmacy with him. As he opened his wallet to pay the cashier for whatever he was buying, three black men behind him leaned over his shoulder. With the greatest insolence, Derek turned, looked back at them and smiled, as if to say, “Yesss?”

Of course Derek could drink too much; and on occasion with players and especially with officials who didn’t approve of his womanizing, and who didn’t like his independence and abrasiveness, particularly with them, and so usually cut him no slack, he could be thorny. But, withal, he had the balls for Life.

We had a fun rivalry and partnership — in the Over 40’s Singles and Doubles in the 1970’s particularly. Rarely could I beat him, so he was always a challenge for me — a challenge even, win or lose, when we played doubles together, for he was an extremely critical partner, and I just had to adapt. In 1982, at the first World Veterans Championships in Gothenburg, Sweden, he and I played our way through some strong pairs, got to the finals of the 50 Doubles — only to lose 19 in the deciding 3rd, Bummer.

But of course our friendship remained strong... until gradually I didn’t see him at tournaments anymore — though even into the 1990’s I understand he was still coaching in Canada or abroad. “Look,” he’d tell his young charges who might be prone to showing off, “you play matches for the points, not for the spectators.” Not surprisingly, his being-a-good-coach credo was that each player is different, and has to be judged and developed as an individual.

And what an individual-Self Derek, my good friend, had— one impossible to forget. Throughout our 20 years of knowing one another, what I most admired about him was his courage, his confidence at the table, his proud bearing, and his free spirit.

No wonder he thought highly of Bergmann.
USA’s Gao Jun Wins China Pro Tour

The “Architect” and the “Killer” Clinch Women’s Doubles Gold In Guangzhou

Article & Photo By: Ian Marshall, ITTF Publications Editor

Place an advertisement for a Women’s Doubles partner and if Gao Jun replies then there is no need for an interview; give her the job, no other potential applicant has a chance.

In Guangzhou at the Panasonic China Open, playing doubles with Spain’s Shen Yanfei, she faced a stern grilling on Sunday, Sept. 17, 2006, but as in the past she passed the test.

Gao and Shen beat China’s Li Xiaoxia and Wang Nan at the final hurdle to clinch gold; it was another title for the duo and another medal to add to Gao’s collection as they won, 8-7, 5-7, 8-7.

Playing Style
A bronze medalist with Chen Zihe in Women’s Doubles at the World Championships in Dortmund in 1989, a silver medalist in 1992 with Chen at the Barcelona Olympics, Gao’s style of play is ideal for Women’s Doubles.

Right-handed, penhold grip, short pimples, close to the table near the net she excels. In Women’s Doubles she creates openings for her partner, and in Shen she has a perfect foil.

Different
Shen Yanfei is left-handed, a shakehands player who is slightly different; she uses short pimpled rubber on the forehead and reversed rubber on the backhand.

The two styles complement each other; Gao is the “Architect,” Shen is the “Killer,” and since they first joined forces in 2005 at the TMS Chinese Taipei Open, success has followed success.

Success
In their first appearance as a Women’s Doubles pair in Chinese Taipei they won the title, and they also won at the Volkswagen Pro Tour Grand Finals at the end of the year. Meanwhile, at the Liebherr Swedish Open in 2005 they reached the semifinal stage, while at the Volkswagen Open Korea and the Volkswagen Open China they also progressed to the final before suffering defeat.

The understanding that has been achieved in a very short space of time is remarkable, while for the beaten finalists, Li Xiaoxia and Wang Nan it is a case of establishing an understanding.

New
“Wang Nan and Li Xiaoxia, they are a new pairing and I guess owing to lack of practice they didn’t do that well,” said Gao. “It is not a case of how well we played, they didn’t play up to their level.” A very modest Gao as always but you only play as well as you are allowed and the champions elect made life difficult for the Chinese duo.

“To play against Chinese players, we are under no pressure at all, we just fight and now the system is eleven point matches, it’s harder to predict what will happen,” continued Gao. “In the fourth game, we had a couple of lucky points, that helped: so the combination of a not so good performance from our opponents and luck being on our side, helped us to win the match.”

Again, Gao was extremely modest, both Shen and Gao played extremely well but the fact that it was the inaugural appearance of Li Xiaoxia and Wang Nan as a doubles pair on the ITTF Pro Tour was a contributory fact in the end result.

Nerves
“It’s the first time I have partnered Wang Nan,” said Li. “I’m a young player and I was a little nervous, I felt under pressure.” It was a daunting task, she was in harness with one of the legends of table tennis and of course she didn’t want to let her partner or country down.

“I had a really strong desire to win the gold medal with Wang Nan,” continued Li. “Before the match I was full of confidence but perhaps I wasn’t fully prepared for the difficulties we faced in the match.”

Rhythm
Playing Gao and Shen is a difficult task, they stop their opponents from establishing a rhythm and for Li establishing a rhythm was difficult. “I didn’t perform to my level,” Li Xiaoxia continued. “I showed a lack of experience on how to handle the situation when we were in trouble.”

Li will learn and she is better for the experience; as for Gao, she abounds in experience and with Shen once again stood proudly on the top step of the medal podium, more silverware had been added to the collection. Gao Jun and Shen Yanfei were the champions.

USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE • November/December 2006
Volkswagen Singapore ITTF Pro Tour
Singapore, SIN • Sept. 7-10, 2006

Men's Singles - Final: Ma Lin (CHN) d. Chuan Chih-Yuan (TPE), -6,-11,2,9,-12,9,5.
SF: Ma Lin d. Zhou Bin (CHN), 7,-5,7,8,5; Chuan d. Ma Long (CHN), 11,-5,5,-7,11,5.
QF: Ma Lin d. Chen Weixing (AUT), -8,11,10,6,7.

SF: Ma Lin d. Zhou Bin (CHN), 9,-6,4,6,12; Li d. Werner Schlager (AUT), -9,8,9,6,6; Boll d. Hou Yingchao (CHN), 7,-10,10,-2,9,9; Wang d. Ma Long (CHN), 10,4,-8,5,9,9.

Men's Doubles - Final: Ma Lin/Che Yin (CHN) d. Wang Liqin/Ma Long (CHN), 8,7,10,-7,10,8,6; SF: Ma/Che d. Jiang Tian (CHN), -6,11,10,9,5; Wang/Ma d. Cho Eon Rai (KOR), 6,-8,4,7,9,8; Li d. Ma Lin (CHN), 8,8,-7,9,6; Chen d. Gao Ning (SIN), 6,-10,9,8,5; Ma d. Jiang Tianyi (HKG), 7,10,7,7,6.

Women's Singles - Final: Zhang Yining (CHN) d. Wang Nan (CHN), 8,8,8,5,-8,9.
SF: Zhang d. Kim Kyung Ah (KOR), 9,6,6,10,8; Wang Nan d. Guo Yan (CHN), 10,5,7,5,-7,5,8; QF: Zhang d. Cao Zhen (CHN), -4,5,2,6,7; Kim d. Jiang Huanju (HKG), -8,7,8,12,5,5; Wang Nan d. Li Jia Wei (SIN), -7,8,10,7,2; Guo d. Wang Yue Gu (SIN), 9,8,3,8,8; Zhang d. Gao Jun (USA), -1,2,6,9,10; Cao d. Li ray Guang (CHN), 3,-9,3,7,2,7; Kim d. Mikie Takahashi (JPN), 2,8,4,5; Jiang d. Tie Yana (HKG), 2,-8,5,5,3; Wang Nan d. Lee Eun Hee (KOR), 12,7,6,6; Li d. Huang Kang (SIN), 7,9,8,9; Wang Yue d. Chiang Chih-Chen (CHN), 7,5,6,10,10,9,7; Guo d. Saki Kanazawa (JPN), 5,5,6,6,7,16; Gao Jun (USA) d. Tan Paisn Fern (SIN), 9,7,14,4.

Women's Doubles - Final: Zhang Yining/ Wang Nan (CHN) d. Tie Yana/Zhang Rui (HKG), 7,1,9,8; SF: Zhang/Wang d. Cao Zhen/Chang Chih-Chen (CHN), 7,8,8,-7,3,4; Tie/ Zhang d. Fujii Hiroko/Sakii Kanazawa (JPN), 7,10,9,13,11; QF: Zhang/Wang d. Lau Fei/Fu Ling (HKG), -5,6,6,8,5; Cao/Chang d. Li Jia Wei/Sun Bei Bei (SIN), 4,9,-5,4,8,7,10; Fujii/Kanazawa d. Tan Paisn Fern/Zhang Xuelong (SIN), 4,6,10,5; Zhang/Rui d. Huang Ji-Wa/Lu Yun-Feng (TPE), 9,4,7,-9,7.

Panasonic China ITTF Pro Tour
Guangzhou, CHN • Sept. 14-17, 2006

Men's Singles - Final: Timo Boll (GER) d. Wang Liqin (CHN), 8,5,8,-4,9,8; SF: Boll d. Li Ching (CHN), 8,9,2,7,10,4; Wang d. Chen Qi (CHN), -7,9,9,-8,4,4; QF: Wang d. Oh Sang Eun (KOR), 4,5,9,4; Chen d. Hao Shuai (CHN), -9,9,6,4,6,12; Li d. Werner Schlager (AUT), -9,8,9,6,6; Boll d. Hou Yingchao (CHN), 7,-10,9,4,2,9; Wang d. Ma Long (CHN), 10,4,-8,5,9,9; Oh d. Joo Se Hyuk (KOR), 6,7,13,9; Hao d. Alexei Smirnov (RUS), 9,5,8,3,8; Chen d. Koji Matsushita (JPN), 6,7,8,9; Li d. Ma Lin (CHN), 8,8,-7,9,-6,-7,8; Schlager d. Ryu Seung Min (KOR), 7,11,5,11,10,8; Hou d. Cheung Yuk (HKG), -4,8,4,-6,10,9,4; Boll d. Ko Lai Chak (HKG), 10,7,6,6,7.

SAITPRODUCTIONS

Volkswagen Japan ITTF Pro Tour
Yokohama, JPN • Sept. 21-24, 2006

Men's Singles - Final: Wang Liqin (CHN) d. Wang Hao (HKG), 10,7,9,8; SF: Wang Liqin d. Ma Lin (CHN), 9,-8,7,9,-6,6,4; Wang Hao d. Timo Boll (GER), -7,14,8,-5,7,9; QF: Wang Liqin d. Yoon Jae Young (KOR), 11,8,6,9; Ma d. Chen Qi (CHN), 8,9,8,7,-7,9,12; Wang Hao d. Ryu Seung Min (KOR), -7,6,7,4,1; Boll d. Oh Sang Eun (KOR), 4,7,4,5,9; Wang Liqin d. Hou Yingchao (CHN), 6,2,-9,5,9,10; Yoon d. Lucjan Blaszczzyk (POL), -5,3,4,-7,9,7; Chen d. Lee Jin Kwon (KOR), 8,6,5,8,8,2; Ma d. Kong Linghui (CHN), def.; Wang Hao d. Chuan Chih-Yuan (TPE), -7,5,3,5,6; Ryu d. Chiang Yen-Shu (TPE), 5,6,7,3, Oh d. Lim Jae Hyun (KOR), 4,11,6,8; Boll d. Joo Se Hyuk (KOR), 7,4,6,7.

Women's Singles - Final: Zhang Yining (SIN) d. Guo Yan (CHN), -9,-7,-4,9,10,12; SF: Zhang d. Chen Qing (CHN), 5,-9,9,10,10; Guo d. Haruna Fukushima (JPN), 10,7,-13,4,6; QF: Guo d. Gao Jun (USA), 6,6,3,2; Fukushima d. Ding Ning (HKG), 8,3,3,8,8,10,6; Wang d. Li Ling (HKG), 7,5,1,7,4; Chen d. Fuji Hiroko (JPN), 5,7,10,5; Bolls: Guo d. Irene Ivancan (GER), -3,7,7,7,9; Guo Jun d. Nicoletta Stefanova (ITA), 7,12,10,8; Ding d. Peng Luyang (CHN), 7,8,10,8,9; Fukushima d. Li Jia Wei (SIN), 8,9,13,5,7,9,8; Wang d. Zhang Rui (KOR), 5,10,9,9; Lin d. Lu Yun-Peng (TPE), 8,4,5,8,9; Chen d. Kim Kae Rok (KOR), 7,8,8,6; Fuji d. Ai Fukuhara (JPN), -12,5,-7,9,9,6.

Women's Doubles - Final: Gao Jun/Shen Yanfei (ESP) d. Wang Nan/Li Xiaoxia (CHN), 10,7,9,7,5; Guo d. Jia Wei/Sun Bei Bei (SIN), 9,8,-5,7,-10,-9,15,12; OF: Tie/Zhang d. Sayaka Hirano/Kasumi Ishikawa (JPN), 6,-7,4,10,6; Cao Peng d. Li Jia Wei/Sun Bei Bei (SIN), 9,8,-5,7,10,9,15; Fujinuma/Fukuhara d. Kim Kae Rok/Park Mi Young (KOR), 7,8,8,6; Fuji d. Ai Fukuhara (JPN), -12,5,-7,9,9,6.

Women's Doubles - Final: Gao Jun/Shen Yanfei (USA/ESP) d. Wang Nan/Li Xiaoxia (CHN), 8,-7,5,8,7,7; SF: Gao Jun/Shen Yanfei d. Kim Bok Rae/Kim Kyung Ah (KOR), 7,8,-4,9,7,15; Wang/Li d. Guo Yan/Zhang Yining (CHN), -1,10,6,3,6; QF: Gao Jun/Shen Yanfei d. Tie Yana/Zhang Rui (HKG), -3,9,-10,10,8,6; Kim/Kim d. Liu Shiweng/Peng Luyang (CHN), -7,9,6,12,8,8; Wang/Li d. Lau Fei/Fu Ling (HKG), 3,8,6; Zhang/Guo d. Svetlana Ganina/Viktoria Parlovich (BLR), -7,10,4,9,7,8; Gao Jun/Shen Yanfei d. Oksana Fadeeva/Veronika Pavlovich (RUS/BLR), -9,9,-11,9,5,5.
DISCOVER FOR YOURSELF WHY MORE STIGA TABLES ARE SOLD IN THE US THAN ALL OTHER BRANDS COMBINED!

FEATURES
* 3/4" TOURNAMENT-BLUE TOP
* COMPETITIVE PLAYING SURFACE
* 1.5" STEEL APRON FOR ADDITIONAL STRENGTH & LEVEL PLAYING SURFACE
* SELF-OPENING 2" SQUARE STEEL LEGS
* EXTRA HEAVY DUTY CHASSIS FOR EXTRA SUPPORT
* 3" BALL BEARING CASTERS
* INCLUDES "PERFORMANCE" NET AND POSTS
* PLAYBACK AND STORAGE POSITIONS

WHY BUY YOUR TABLE FROM THE TABLE TENNIS PIONEERS?
- BEST PRICE ANYWHERE, GUARANTEED
- FREQUENT BUYER POINTS
- FRIENDLY AND HELPFUL SERVICE
- ONLINE ORDER TRACKING
- FREE SHIPPING AND CURBSIDE DELIVERY (TO MOST LOCATIONS)

2006 TABLE TENNIS PIONEERS STIGA CLUB PROGRAM

Have Your Club join the 2006 TTP/STIGA Club Program and get many fantastic benefits:
Discounts, Sponsorships, Free Stuff, Up to $5000 Of Savings!

Benefits and requirements are flexible, so contact us today so that we can tailor a program that is ideal for our club. Be quick, there are only a very few spots left in the 2006 club program!

THE TABLE TENNIS PIONEERS
ping-pong.com/TTT pioneers | 1-800-318-PING (7464) | TTPioneers@ping-pong.com
Interview with Stefan Feth:
Former German Team Member Dominates USA Tournaments But Focuses on Coaching

By Larry Hodges | Photo By NATT

Date of Birth: 03/27/1980
Height/Weight: 150 cm (5'9''), 68 kg (151 lb)

Hometown: Lahnstein, Germany
Current Hometown: Mountain View, California
Home Club (USA): Palo Alto Table Tennis Club

BEST TITLES

USA
• 2006 SoCal Open Champion
• 2006 Berkeley Open Champion
• 2006 San Diego Open Champion
• 2006 Western Open Champion
• 2005 Lafayette Open Champion
• 2005 Western Open Champion
• 2005 Newgy Robo-Pong Open Champion
• 2004 & 2005 Golden State Open Champion

International
• 2006 U.S. Open Men’s Doubles Runner-up
• 2005 Slovenian ITTF Pro Tour Men’s Doubles Runner-up
• 2003 U.S. ITTF Pro Tour Men’s Doubles, Third Place
• 2002 Austrian ITTF Pro Tour U21 Men’s Singles Third place
• 2001 Slovenian ITTF Pro Tour U21 Men’s Singles Champion
• 2001 English ITTF Pro Tour U21 Men’s Singles Third Place
• 1997 European Junior Champion

German Titles
• 2002 & 2004 German Nationals Men’s Singles Third Place
• 2003 German Nationals Mixed Doubles Third Place
• 2002 German Nationals Mixed Doubles Runner-up
• 2001 & 2006 German Nationals Men’s Doubles Third Place
• 1997 German Junior Champion

...a great opportunity has presented itself in the U.S. National League System.

How did you get started in table tennis?
My brother started playing table tennis first and I became interested after watching him. After a while, I started going to the club with him at the age of six.

How and where did you train as a junior, and how did you become a top player?
I was on the cadet and junior national team from 1991 to 1997. Every month we had a training camp, where I would miss a week of school but it was important for me to still be able to do well in school.

When I turned 16, I decided to attend a special high school for Elite Athletes, this is where I had school from 8 AM to 2 PM and TT practice from 3 to 5 PM and one more session from 7 to 9 PM. I was at that sports center Monday to Friday and on the weekend I had either league matches with my team or other tournaments to play.

In my opinion, that was the best combination of TT and still be able to have my school education, which remained a top priority for my family and I.

Most German top players quit school at 16 to become Pro. In my case, I wanted to have the highest academic education as well.

One of the most important factors for me to become a top player was to participate in the German Leagues. I played my first league match at the age of eight for the local junior team in my area.

At that age, I attended nearly every match of my favorite team, Grenzau, which always played for the German Bundesliga Championship Title. It was always my dream to play at this level, play in that arena and compete against the best of the world. From very early on, I had these goals in my life.

When did you become a professional player and a member of the German National Team?
I became professional in 1999 after my high school graduation. I was a German National Team Member from 1991 to 2005 as a Cadet, Junior and finally Senior for the Men’s Team.

How would you describe your playing style?
Topspin player, both side looper – I enjoy rallies.
The USA Table Tennis National Championships’ venue is the centrally located Las Vegas Convention Center, 3150 Paradise Road, Las Vegas, about ten minutes away by shuttle bus from the USATT Headquarter Hotel, The Stratosphere Hotel and Casino located at 2000 S. Las Vegas Blvd. The shuttle bus, which runs every 20 minutes from 8 am to 10 pm between the hotel and convention center, is free. Special buses for Paralympic players are also provided.

Hotel Reservations: To reserve room accommodations at the Stratosphere, call 1-800-998-6937. Mention the USATT reservation code: C/USAT6 to get the special room rate for single/double occupancy of $33.00, plus room/resort tax, per day. Reservations must be made before November 12, 2006 in order to get the special USATT rate.

Entries: Official USATT entries have been mailed out to all USATT members. On-line entries will be available on the www.usatt.org website in early October. For both on-line and mailed entries, the deadline for entering the U.S. National Championships is, Friday, November 3. Mail must be postmarked no later than November, 3rd. Late entries deadline is Friday, November 10 for a late fee of $75.00. Entries postmarked after November 10, 2006 will not be accepted.
WHAT WAS A TYPICAL DAILY AND WEEKLY TRAINING SCHEDULE WHEN YOU WERE TRAINING FULL-TIME? WHO DID YOU TRAIN WITH?

I began practicing intensively in 1999 at the Grenzau Club, which was also an Olympic center. The whole group met for breakfast at 8:30 AM at the hotel restaurant at the Center.

Our TT session started at 10 and finished by 12:30. After the first session, the whole team would go back to the hotel restaurant to have lunch. I had a nap every day between the first and second session. The second session started at 4 PM and was done by 6 PM. In addition to the TT sessions, we were either working out in the gym or running outdoors in the forest. To finish off the night, everyone would have dinner together and return to their homes afterward. The typical living arrangements would be everyone living by themselves close to the center.

In these seven professional years at Grenzau, I had two coaches—Andrzej Grubba and Chen Zhibin. Chen Zhibin moved from the player position to become the team coach. Famous players who were part of that group were: Wang Tao, Ma Wenge, Peter Kobel, Lucjan Blaszczzyk, Steffen Fetzner, Chen Zhibin, Trinko Keen, Zoltan Fejer-Kommerth, Cheung Yuk and the girls Nicole Struse and Jie Schoep.

In addition to this list of top players, there were also always great players who dropped by to join us for practice.

IF YOU COULD GO BACK IN TIME AND SAY ONE THING TO YOURSELF AS AN UP-AND-COMING JUNIOR, WHAT WOULD YOU SAY?

In my opinion, the transition from junior status to become a top professional player at a senior level can be a very tough time. I think the biggest thing is to be able to learn how to handle losses, whether on the table or negative situations off the table. Someone's confidence can be shaken by a few bad results and in turn off the table, can be infected by other people's criticisms. So my advice to the up-and-coming juniors is to have short-term goals and to be mentally tough and not give up.

My other comment is for players to realize that table tennis is not just about winning or losing. It is about having good sportsmanship—that is the bigger picture that we can all apply and carry throughout our life outside of table tennis. Finally, always try to be positive—you can make a positive situation out of a negative.

DID YOU PLAY IN THE GERMAN BUNDESLIGA? FOR HOW LONG, FOR WHAT CLUBS, AND WHAT WERE YOUR BEST RESULTS?

I played in the German Bundesliga 1st Division for five years. I started with my childhood club, Grenzau, where we won the Championship Title in 2002. My Grenzau teammates were Ma Wenge, Peter Kobel, Chen Zhibin, Lucjan Blaszczzyk and Steffen Fetzner. Following that, I received an offer to play for Karlsruhe. I played there for two years, with my first year not being my best performance. My second year was much better where I had some amazing results. With this, Grenzau wanted to re-sign me. This second time around with Grenzau, the 2004-2005 season was not our best. After this, I could have played for Grenzau but would have been at times due to both Trinko Keen and Cheung Yuk joining the team. Because I wanted to play every possible match that I could, I opted to play for another team, Tuendern. Along with Dimitri Ovtcharov, we led the team to stay in the top division. With Tuendern I finished my professional career in April, 2006.

COULD YOU TELL US ANYTHING ABOUT YOUR GREAT PLAY AT THE SAN DIEGO OPEN EARLIER THIS YEAR?

That’s the one where, in the semifinals, you were down 0-3 in games and 1-7 in the fourth against Wilson Zhang, and won 14 straight points on your way to winning the match in seven, and then won the final, 11-9 in the seventh over Fan Guoliang!

Being 0-3 down with Wilson forced me to change my tactics—at that point, I was waiting for my momentum to kick in and bring me to a higher level that I used to play. My match against Fan Guoliang, in my opinion, if it was ever possible, the winner should have been both of us. We both played extremely well and both deserved to win, but in the end, the match was determined by a two point difference for me.

WHAT’S THE MOST INTERESTING THING THAT YOU’VE EXPERIENCED AS A TABLE TENNIS PLAYER? (BESIDES THE SAN DIEGO OPEN!)

One of the most interesting things as professional table tennis player is to be able to travel around the world. I got the opportunity to experience the world, which gives me a bigger sense of life.

As for exciting table tennis results, it’s very hard to pinpoint since there are so many, all unique in their own ways. One that stuck out in my mind is when Thomas Keinath and I won against Liu Guoliang and Guo Jinhao at the 2002 U.S. Open, which was actually Liu’s last match of his professional career.

YOU RECENTLY MOVED TO THE U.S., AND ARE NOW COACHING IN CALIFORNIA. COULD YOU TELL US ABOUT THAT? ARE YOU NOW COACHING FULL-TIME?

I work for the Palo Alto TT Association as a Elite Development Coach. One of my projects, along with Dennis Davis, is to coach the Elite Junior Program. One of our goals within this program is to start the younger kids with the “correct” game. For the higher levels, we want to bring the top cadets and juniors to a world-class level.

WHAT ARE YOUR UPCOMING PLANS AND GOALS IN THE U.S., AS A PLAYER AND/OR COACH?

From the main point of view, I have finished my playing career and am now looking for opportunities to take it to the next level. One of my projects, along with Dennis Davis, is to coach the Elite Junior Program. I work for the Palo Alto TT Association as an Elite Development Coach, and I work as a mentor to the players. One of my projects, along with Dennis Davis, is to coach the Elite Junior Program.

WHAT DO YOU DO THESE DAYS WHEN YOU ARE NOT PLAYING TABLE TENNIS? HOBBIES, SPORTS, MUSIC, SCHOOL, ETC.? ANY OTHER INTERESTS OUTSIDE TABLE TENNIS?

I love going to concerts, collecting concert DVDs, going to movies, watching soccer, shopping, sleeping and being around nice people.

ANYTHING ELSE INTERESTING TO ADD?

In order to build table tennis successfully in the U.S., everyone needs to respect one another and be able to work together to achieve this one common goal.

I am very thankful to Palo Alto and especially to Dennis Davis to have the opportunity to build a new life here, and the chance to have a positive influence in U.S. table tennis.

Last but not least, I have to thank my family for all the support that they have provided over the years—without them, I would not have the possibility of being in the position I am in. I would like to especially thank my mother for giving me the courage to go after my goals and dreams and to try to make them happen.
Both the TW2700-06 and the TW2000-05 use Double Spin Technology to feed no spin, top spin, under spin, and side spin balls and has programmable spin control and ball ejection speed. These functions cannot be performed by a single spin machine.

There are 9 different feeding positions. By pressing the left or right buttons on the Control Panel you can easily control and select the ball’s trajectory angle.

These two robots have 3 different modes for the user to choose from:
1) Regular-mode (fixed feeding position)
2) Auto-mode (feeds irregular, left and right)
3) Self-mode (programmed by user)

The machines have memory function and can record inputted programs and memory of last plays mode and order. A collection net is used to automatically gather back the balls into the robot’s feeding tray.

**TW2700-06 Robot**

$1,299

**Special Offer:**
Free Gross of Double Fish balls
Free shipping if ordered before Dec. 2006

**TW2000-05 Robot**

$1,150

**Special Offer:**
Free Gross of Double Fish Balls
Free shipping if ordered before Dec. 2006

**Double Fish Tables 99-45B/G**

New - $1199 & Tournament Used - $795
Butterfly once again has pushed the technology envelope to a new level to produce the fastest blade in its line-up, the Boll TriCarbon. Featuring 3-Carbon layers, the Boll TriCarbon offers uncompromising power while still maintaining excellent control. Three layers of carbon give this blade a huge sweet-spot and explosive power. The outer plies are made up of exotic Padukwood, which is a very fast, dense wood that helps provide even more ball acceleration. If you are a power player that wants the ultimate weapon then the Boll TriCarbon should be your blade of choice. Speed: 11.0, Spin: 6.8
PowerSponge is the revolutionary new rubber from BUTTERFLY. Extensive work by the Research & Development Department of Tamasu Butterfly has culminated in rubber that produces the high level of spin and speed required in modern day table tennis, while virtually requiring no changes to present day techniques. It is modern day table tennis without the need to use speed glue! Available in Sriver, Sriver FX, Bryce & Bryce FX.

meets the requirements of the solvent glue ban proposed by the ITTF and scheduled to take effect from 1st September 2008.
Eric just got a Robo-Pong for Christmas.

Put a smile on your face, eric just got a Robo-Pong for Christmas. He was very pleased with the gift. He said it exceeded his expectations. Eric loves Robo-Pong and uses it daily. He recommends it to everyone. Robo-Pong is the perfect gift for anyone who loves to play table tennis. It is easy to use and very entertaining. Thank you for making my Christmas special.

Eric Owens
U.S. Men's Singles Champion

Each product comes with a 30 day money-back guarantee, 1 year warranty and a free 5 year service policy.

OPTIONAL ACCESSORIES FOR ROBO-PONG

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACCESSORY</th>
<th>540</th>
<th>1040</th>
<th>2040</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recycling Net Upgrade</td>
<td>$379.00</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP 540 Upgrade Kit</td>
<td>$169.00</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ball Catch Net II</td>
<td>$74.95</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Side Nets (for BCNII)</td>
<td>$14.95</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robo-Tote</td>
<td>$49.95</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pong-Master</td>
<td>$139.95</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robo-Caddy</td>
<td>$69.95</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pong-Pal</td>
<td>$19.95</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucket Extender</td>
<td>$24.95</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40mm Robo-Balls (144)</td>
<td>$59.95/144</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38mm Robo-Balls (144)</td>
<td>$49.95/144</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tray Liners</td>
<td>$16.00</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ROBO-PONG FEATURES CHART

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FEATURE</th>
<th>540</th>
<th>1040</th>
<th>2040</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recycling Net</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ball Bucket</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remote Control</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oscillation Control</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Angle Adjustment</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spin Selection</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spin/Speed Range</td>
<td>1-9</td>
<td>1-10</td>
<td>1-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency Range</td>
<td>1-7</td>
<td>1-10</td>
<td>1-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ball Capacity 40mm</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>120*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 40mm Balls Included</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Videotape</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Book</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Recommended Capacity. Balls Recycle

Cost Effective • Upgradable • Add Features Quickly & Easily

When you're looking for the ultimate entertainment system, choose Robo-Pong. This table tennis robot provides endless hours of fun for anyone who loves to play. With a variety of options available, you can customize your Robo-Pong to suit your needs. Whether you're a beginner or an expert, Robo-Pong will keep you entertained for hours.

CALL NOW
For more information or to place your order, call...

If you choose to purchase this product, you will be able to enjoy many hours of fun and entertainment. Robo-Pong is the perfect gift for anyone who loves to play table tennis. Thank you for choosing Robo-Pong.
You loved one’s face by
as a gift. The perfect
e tennis fan! We’ll let
ick Endebrock tell us
guess what gift cap-
family with tremen-
ove the game of ev-
ch for the joy of
line. It has afforded
sure to kids as well as
forward to many
ament using the Newgy

Your first step to seeing how robot practice can revolu-
tionize your game. This model is ideal for recrea-
tional players and the budget-minded. Lower speed and fre-
quency ranges and static delivery accommodate untrained strokes. Set on top of table and twist base to
desired trajectory. Improved bucket design ensures
able ball feed. Add optional Ball Catch Net II for
manual recycling of your returns. Optional Pong-Pal
provides quick and easy retrieval of stray balls, even in
hard-to-reach areas. Upgrade Robo-Pong 540 to
Robo-Pong 1040 with the Robo-Pong 540 Upgrade
Kit.

The next step up is this great robot for intermediate
and tournament level players. Includes all features of
Robo-Pong 540 plus oscillation and more powerful
speed/frequency controls. Bucket Extender expands
capacity for longer continuous play. Optional Ball
Catch Net II captures your returns and enables manual
recycling of the balls. Optional Pong-Pal provides
quick and easy retrieval of stray balls, even in hard-to-
reach areas. Optional Robo-Caddy provides multiple
robot placement options or becomes a ball holder for
serve practice. Upgrade Robo-Pong 1040 to Robo-
Pong 2040 with the Recycling Net Upgrade Kit.

you’re ready for the big step, this is the
ute robot for serious players or those with dis-
ating tastes. Used by top players like US
ption Eric Owens. Can do everything Robo-
0 does and more. Recycling Net captures
returns and automatically recycles the balls for
pp action! Permits aerobic workouts. Folds
impact storage and easy transport. Plug in
al Pong-Master for a fun target game to hone
curacy and consistency or use it as a timer
ur drills. Optional Robo-Tote protects your
during storage and transport.

1-800-55-NEWGY
more information or to order visit us online at
www.newgy.com

Ordering online, enter the coupon code in the coupon
on the first page of your shopping cart or if ordering
one, give the coupon code to the call attendant.
ons expire 12/31/2006.

Newgy Industries, Inc. • 805 Teal Drive • Gallatin, TN 37066 USA • Phone: 615-452-6470 • Fax: 615-230-9785 • e-mail: newgy@newgy.com
From August 1-10, I had the pleasure of conducting an Olympic Solidarity Course in the capital city of Thimphu at the Bhutan Table Tennis National Training Center. Olympic Solidarity is a branch of the International Olympic Committee whose mandate is to develop sport within underdeveloped countries. Hundreds of training courses are funded each year through this program.

Bhutan is located between India and Tibet and is one of the most unspoiled natural environments in the World. It is also a unique example of the original Himalayan culture and is the only country in the World to adapt the Tibetan Form of Buddhism as the national religion. It is also a long two-day trip from Denver, Colorado.

Just getting into the country is a surreal experience as your airplane weaves its way between mountain peaks of more than 15,000 feet to land at the country’s one runway in Paro. Arriving more than eight hours late, I was greatly relieved to find that my hosts had waited patiently for me at the airport. It was then an additional ninety-minute drive through the mountains to the capital city of Thimphu which itself lies about 9,500 feet above sea level. One of the first things that caught my attention, besides the incredible unspoiled beauty of the mountains, was that everyone spoke English. It seems that English is the language used throughout their education system. All business and road signs were also in English and this makes Bhutan a very easy country for an American to get around in.

Twenty-five Physical Education and Sports and Games Teachers took part in the course. The participants came from every area of the country. Some had to walk many miles from remote villages to reach the main highway to catch a bus into the city. The course represented a major effort by the country to continue the development of table tennis throughout its school system. Bhutan already holds regional school competitions and a National Schools Tournament each year. The hope is that with more education for the coaches, both the quality of play as well as the numbers of participants at the school level would greatly increase.

While Bhutan is remote and has been somewhat isolated and protected for centuries by its mountains, the sport of table tennis has a long history within the Kingdom. Bhutan’s national sports are archery and soccer; however the popularity of table tennis has been growing for years and it was one of the first sports that Bhutan competed in, internationally.

The course was very well organized by Ugyen Tshering, Secretary General of the Bhutan Table Tennis Association and also their Men’s Singles National Champion. All course participants received complete playing kits and the daily training...
consisted of two three-hour sessions. The ITTF's excellent Level One Coaching Manual served as the basis of the course and I added some additional material of my own as time allowed. Training consisted of both table tennis theory and lots of practical application work. The course participants worked very hard throughout the course and showed much improvement in both their level of knowledge and in their own personal playing skills. Press coverage was excellent with several articles about the course appearing in the national newspaper and on national television.

My evenings were also very busy as I pulled double duty by conducting training sessions for the Bhutan National Team. They were in training for the South Asian Federation Games (SAF) that was to be held from August 18-27 at Colombo, Sri Lanka. The overall age of their national team members was quite young and their level stronger than I had expected. I would estimate the level of their National Women at between USATT ratings of 2100-2250 and their Men between 2200 and 2400. As there was only a short time before competition, I focused the training sessions on serve and serve return, match tactics, sport psychology, and drills that rehearsed game situations.

During my stay, my hosts provided a day trip to Punakha, which is the original capital of the Kingdom. Built in the 1600's it served as a fort/monastery which is called a "Dzong." There are a number of Dzongs around the country and the architecture is truly beautiful. There was one small shrine resting in a pond at Punakha that has been shrinking slowly over the centuries. The locals believe that when the shrine goes completely under the water the end of the earth will occur.

A special thank you needs to be given to the U.S. Table Tennis Companies of Butterflyonline.com and Newgy Industries for supplying 30 rackets and more than 600 balls for the course. The Leach Family of Denver, Colorado also donated more than 100 sheets of used high-level Butterfly Rubber that was used to upgrade the rackets of many upcoming young players.

Over the years, I have had the opportunity to conduct a number of ITTF Courses in other countries. I have always found that I learn as much from these experiences as the Coaches learn from the Course itself. Bhutan was no exception. Here is a country that has only one training center in the country and it contains only four tables. There are many one-table clubs in cities, villages, and schools. Coaches are running programs and creating players within these one-table clubs and often with only a few rackets and a dozen balls to last throughout the year. What can we learn from this? Simply, "it is not the size of the training hall or the amount of equipment that is important." It is the quality of what is being taught on that one table that matters!

Bhutan is a remote country that is quickly becoming much more connected to the rest of the World. There are now lots of cars and parking problems in the Capital of Thimphu, cell phones are everywhere, and both the internet and cable television are making inroads into society. While the country of Bhutan is striving to develop itself into a modern country it is also very determined to keep its rich cultural heritage. It is truly a unique country, unspoiled and natural. I hope that many of you will some day get the opportunity to visit the "Kingdom of the Dragon." When you do, bring your racket. You will meet a wonderful people who are kind, honorable, enjoy life and play table tennis.
I recently had the great pleasure of conducting an ITTF Level 1 Coaching Course in the country of Dominica in the West Indies. Dominica is a small country of about 70,000 residents and is called the “Nature Island” for its rugged beauty. In fact, much of the new movie, “Pirates of the Caribbean II,” was filmed there.

This was the fifth course that I have given in this region, and I am always impressed with how much the people of these small countries love table tennis. Dominica was no exception. Twenty-four coaches took part in the week-long course, Feb. 20-25, 2006. Many of the participants were school teachers who were already running programs within their schools. Showing their support for the course, the government gave the teachers the week off to attend.

For six hours a day, the coaches studied and trained hard using the excellent ITTF Level 1 Coaching Manual as the course textbook. I am always amazed at how much knowledge this course provides in only one week as well as how much personal improvement of playing skills can be seen. On the sixth day, about 20 of the better juniors were brought in for a training camp that was conducted by the coaches themselves. The kids had a great time and it gave me an opportunity to observe and evaluate the coaches in an actual teaching situation. Overall, everyone did a great job and gained a lot of confidence from the experience.

There is great potential for the development of the sport of table tennis in Dominica. There are a number of tables spread out over the country and several junior programs are already in progress. Now for the first time they also have a core of trained coaches ready to take on the challenge of developing the sport.

Putting together an ITTF Course is no easy job and there are several persons and agencies that need to be thanked. Special thanks must go to the Dominica Table Tennis President, Mr. Edger Berridge, for his hours of hard work in making all the arrangements and to the Dominica Olympic Committee, who worked with the IOC’s Olympic Solidarity Programme to make the course possible.

Two American Table Tennis Companies, Butterflyonline.com and Newgy Industries also deserve thanks for their support, both donated equipment for the course; their kindness greatly enhanced the course.

I also want to thank the many players from the Denver, Colorado area who donated table tennis rubber and blades. This equipment put broad smiles on the local Dominica players’ faces.

On a personal note, I experience a “once in a life-time experience” when I had the chance to go whale watching one afternoon. (See inset at top.) We were lucky to see more than a dozen sperm whales. Nothing can prepare you for the sight of a large whale tale (fluke) pointing straight for the sky just before it dives. It was a perfect memory from an exciting and wonderful country.
NEW COMBO SPECIALS

Include these fantastic JUIC blades + 2 sheets of JUIC, JOOLA, NITTAKU, TINHAR, STIGA, YASAKA, or STAG rubber

[Extra charge for some rubbers]

LIGHT OFFENSE II - NEW BLADE

Look no further! Here’s the ideal blade for the offensive player who wants a very fast and controllable blade! Only 67 grams in weight, this OFF-speed blade is great for the offensive player who needs excellent touch for the finesse and good speed for the kill. Handle: FL, ST/Wt.: 91 gm/Plies 5W/Blade only: $49.95 /

Item: SJLIG CLASS OFF-SPEED 83 / CONTROL 67

COUGA SPECIAL

NANO TECHNOLOGY! This rubber from JUIC is truly ahead of its time! By applying Nano technology to the manufacturing process JUIC has come up with a rubber that provides the feel and speed that other rubbers can only achieve through the use of speed glue. This innovation is critically important since the ITTF has set a September 2007 deadline for the elimination of harmful matter from all adhesives.


Nano Cannon - Smooth

Highest Power Rating! With the newest Japanese nano-technology and with the process of fusion-pulverization-reunion of nano level, Nano Cannon is produced. With nano-unification, the sponge and ophset are far more flexible than regular rubbers, providing greater rotation and stability, while the ball hit by this rubber draws a sharp arch in the air with superb speed.

Sponge 1.0, 1.5, 2.0. Max. Item: RINAN SPEED 9.5 / SPIN 9.5 / CONTROL 6.5 / POWER 9.8

NEW TOP QUALITY CASES FROM JUIC

Two Tone Paddle-Shaped Cases

Single $9.95 / Double $10.95

Sophisticated design, great cloth fabric, nice padding, and zipped outer pocket that holds up to three balls. Single case has one zipped compartment that holds one paddle. The double case has two zipped compartments for holding two paddles. Three color choices: Navy/Red, Black/Blue, and Black/Orange.

Single: Item: CJTWOPS / Double Item: CJTWOPD

Juic Joy Bag SPECIAL

Reg. $34.95 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-full. Zipped pocket at top fits CD player with conveniently placed hole for headset wire. Two side zip pockets with inner compartments for water bottles, rubber cleaners, 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!

Black w/Silver: Item: AJJR / Red w/Black: Item: AJJB

NEW CONCEPT

NEW LARGER 50ml SIZE SAME PRICE!

Juic Aqua Stick - NEW CONCEPT

CAN BE SHIPPED BY AIR! NEW LARGER 50ml SIZE SAME PRICE!

This is a water-based glue in a roll-up stick. After September 2008, all glues which contain harmful solvents will be banned. To meet the new change, JUIC developed this safe water-based glue for adhering rubber to the blade. The convenient, easy-to-transport, legal, and environmentally friendly regular glue does not expand sponge or have a speed-glue effect. 50ml size. Item: AYAS

Special! $21.95

Juic Joy Bag SPECIAL

Reg. $34.95 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-full. Zipped pocket at top fits CD player with conveniently placed hole for headset wire. Two side zip pockets with inner compartments for water bottles, rubber cleaners, 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!

Black w/Silver: Item: AJJR / Red w/Black: Item: AJJB

Special! $32.95

1-800-547-5891

paddlepalace.com
Nittaku 3-Star Premium
The Nittaku 3-Star Premium 40mm ball is the highest grade of Nittaku 3-Star balls. Manufactured in Japan to higher specifications with higher quality material than any other ball. It stands in a class of its own. Nittaku 3-Star Premium balls are more consistent in hardness and they last longer than any other ball in the world. Label on ball says "Premium 40, Made in Japan". Packaged in boxes of 3 balls each. Item BN3P
$6.25 for 3 balls / $14.95 for 6 balls / $22.95 for 12 balls.

Nittaku Top Ball
Best practice ball in the world! This 40mm ball is made in Japan. Made with the same quality material and process in the same Nittaku factory as the Premium ball. These balls did not pass all the very strict tests to become designated as Premium. Packaged as loose balls in a bulk-pack of 2 dozen (24) or 10 dozen (120) balls. White or orange. Item BN3T
$15.95 for 2 dozen / $69.95 for 10 dozen

Young Star
Excellent 40mm practice ball from Nittaku, at a great price. Packaged in boxes of 3 balls. White or orange. Item BN4Y
$5.95 for 12 balls / $49.95 for 12 dozen (144)

Nittaku 44mm Large Ball
These are the finest quality 3-Star ball with the oversized 44mm diameter, extra-large for the 44mm game. Slower speed, less spin – easier to see, hit, and control. Excellent quality, made in Japan by Nittaku with the same highest quality materials as the Premium balls. Orange only. Packaged in boxes of 3 balls. Item BN44P
$6.50 for 3 balls / $12.50 for 6 balls / $23.95 for 12 balls.

COMBO SPECIALS INCLUDE BLADE + 2 SHEETS RUBBER from JOOLA, JUIC, NITTAKU, STIGA, TIBHAR, YASAKA, or STAG
(Not: extra charge for some rubbers)

1-800-547-5891
COMBO SPECIAL
$89.95
Item: XSTREV
Revolt
Normally trying to produce an offensive blade that balances equally the mix of speed and control is very difficult. However through a lot of experimentation Tibhar has managed to do so with the new blade Revolt. Now explosive power is possible while still maintaining wonderful ball feeling. Handle: FL, AN, ST. Wgt: 86 gm. Pkgs: 2. Blade only $44.95. Item: STR.E. CLASS OFF+/ SPEED 88 / CONTROL 68

COMBO SPECIAL
$174.95
Item: XSTH19
H-1-9
Announcing the rebirth of our legendary, super-fast H-1-9 blade! This famous one-ply Hinoki wood blade has been completely revised in shape and weight to be a thoroughly modern blade that is very fast and hard for offensive play. Handle: FL, AN, ST. Wgt: 86 gm. Pkgs: 1. Blade only $129.95. Item: ST. H 19. CLASS OFF+/ SPEED 97 / CONTROL 56

Nimbus
No need for speed glue! Nimbus is Tibhar's new developed 'speedglue integrated configuration' giving you all the essential factors of speedglue rubber. Incredible spin-speed-dynamic plus typical sound and ball contact feeling. You'll be ready when glue is banned in 2007. Sponge 1.8, 2.0. Max. Item: TRIM. SPEED 9.6 / SPIN 9.2 / CONTROL 6.9 / POWER 8.5

Speedy Spin Tuned
Speedy Spin is now available in a faster version "TUNED". New technology tunes this rubber for even more power + speed. Special airtight packaging keeps the effect within the rubber. Sponge 2.0. Max. Item: RTSST. SPEED 9.4 / SPIN 9.3 / CONTROL 6.9 / POWER 9.2


FRESH - NEW BAGS FROM TIBHAR
Fresh Sports Bag
Very light sports bag made from resistant polyester. Big main compartment with zipper, permitting wide opening. Front pocket with zipper and two lateral spacious pockets. Stable plastic bottom. Adjustable, removable and reinforced strap. Two separate handles with loop for an optimal carrying. Made of polyester 600D. Super. Available in color red/black or blue/black. Measurements are 64 x 34 x 31cm. Item: FTR. Price: $34.95

Fresh Double Rectangular Case
$16.95
Item: FTD2F
These quality rectangular cases have integrated protection foam and cushioned cover walls guaranteeing optimal bat protection. Peripheral zipper permitting total opening. Additional front zipper with pocket. Single case holds one paddle. Double case holds two paddles. Single case available in red/black or blue/black. Double case available in blue/black. Item: D2F / Single CT4F

Fresh Single Rectangular Case
$13.95
Item: FTSF

Aluminum Rectangular Case
$37.95
Item: CTAL

We will match our competitors' prices!
Happy Holidays!

www.ping-pong.com

Simply The Best

From The Table Tennis Pioneers

- Largest Selection
- Best-Price Guarantee
- Over 100,000 Items In Stock
- Enhanced Frequent Buyer Program
- Online Order Tracking
- Most Knowledgeable Staff
- Best Specials and Combos
- Try-a-Blade Program

THE TABLE TENNIS PIONEERS

ping-pong.com/ttpioneers | 1-800-319-PING (7464) | ttpioneers@ping-pong.com
China Dominates By USATT Vice President and USA Junior Girls’ Team Coach Lily Yip

The USA team members had the opportunity to participate in The ITTF World Junior Circuit Tiaoyuan Junior Open from August 31 to September 4. This event was held in the Bin He Sports Center of Tai Yuan City, Shan Xi Province, and organized by the CTTA and the People’s government of Taiyuan city. I must say that Taiyuan City has changed a lot since I last visited the city in 1982; today it is truly a modern city.

The first two days of the tournament were the round robin tournament. There were sixteen countries represented with some countries sending two, three, or four teams. It was a strong field for the girls, with powerhouse China, Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore, Thailand, and Chinese Taipei. Romania, Greece, and Canada also fielded formidable teams. The Junior Under 18 Girls’ Teams were divided into four groups with four or five teams per group. Two teams from each group advanced to the main draw of eight teams.

In the first stage of the Junior Under 18 Girls’ Teams, USA’s second team, Stephanie Shih & Barbara Wei, finished last in the A group with an 0-3 record. Results for that group: 1st China A; 2nd Singapore B; 3rd Wang Qing Club B; 4th USA A.

The Cadet Under 15 Girls’ Team event was also another Chinese final with Wang Qing Club C edging out Wang Qing Club A (3-2). Other results: 3rd Romania/Wang Qing Club C; 4th India A; 5th Wang Qing Club D.

In Under 12 Girls’ Teams, the Wang Qing Club B team clinched the gold from Korea. Team USA did not participate in this event.

In Under 18 Junior Singles, Judy Hugh was seeded into the main draw where she lost in the first round to Wan Jia of China in straight games (7,5,2,9). Our three other players (Atta Fong, Stephanie Shih and Barbara Wei) lost in the round robin groups.

Results for that group: 1st Wang Qing Club; 2nd Korea B; 3rd Singapore C; 4th Canada; 5th USA A.

In Cadet Under 15 Girls’ Singles, Olena Sowers was seeded into the main draw where she lost to Cui Chen Xue of China in straight games (3,5,5,3) in the first round. In the final, Cheng-l-Ching of Chinese Taipei overcame Ankieta Das of India (10-6,17-6,1,8).

In Cadet Under 12 Girls’ Singles, Ariel Hsing emerged from her Preliminary Group. In the first round she defeated Zhao Min of China (4,6,5,5). In the second round she lost to He Xing of China (9,5,5,7), who went on to win the event, defeating Li Chao, also of China, in the final (1-4,7-9,-5,4,10).

In closing, I would like to mention that the hard work of the Chinese players and coaches and how they go about developing the next generation of the top table tennis players in the world is paying dividends. If we want to compete with the best in the world we have to create a training system similar to the one in China, a system that includes a strong support network.

The ITTF junior camp was also conducted at the Zhengding Center, Aug. 21-29. Many good players from traditionally strong table tennis countries such as China, Korea, Singapore, Japan, and Taiwan didn’t participate in this ITTF junior camp, preferring their own preparations. However, Coach Musaki and I decided that our USA players should participate, hopefully to learn better techniques and training methods. The ITTF hired four famous Chinese coaches, including the former coach of Wang Nan, three-time Woman’s Singles World Champion. A Chinese professional player was provided for every two players participating. It seems that this ITTF junior camp’s purpose was to support some of the developing countries in table tennis such as India, Sri Lanka, Kazakhstan, New Zealand, and Egypt. However, to their credit the Chinese coaches tried to give one Chinese practice partner for each of our U.S. players.

As part of the program our team members had the opportunity to participate in The ITTF World Junior Circuit Tiaoyuan Junior Open from August 31 to September 4. This event was held in the Bin He Sports Center of Tai Yuan City, Shan Xi Province, and organized by the CTTA and the People’s government of Taiyuan city. I must say that Taiyuan City has changed a lot since I last visited the city in 1982; today it is truly a modern city.

The first two days of the tournament were the round robin tournament event. There were sixteen countries represented with some countries sending two, three, or four teams. It was a strong field for the Girls, with powerhouse China, Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore, Thailand, and Chinese Taipei. Romania, Greece, and Canada also fielded formidable teams. The Junior Under 18 Girls’ Teams were divided into four groups with four or five teams per group. Two teams from each group advanced to the main draw of eight teams.

In the first stage of the Junior Under 18 Girls’ Teams, USA’s second team, Stephanie Shih & Barbara Wei, finished last in the A group with an 0-3 record. Results for that group: 1st China A; 2nd Singapore B; 3rd Wang Qing Club B; 4th USA A.

USA’s first team, Judy Hugh & Atta Fong, also finished last in their group of five teams, losing all matches 0-3, except for their match with Canada, which they lost 2-3.
USA Results at the 2006 Maccabi Australia International Games

Olympic Park • Sydney, Australia • July 2-10, 2006

Over 1000 Athletes from 15 Countries

USA Medal Winners:
- Bronze, Teams – Team USA: Eric Finkelstein, Marius Wechsler, Adam Bobrow, Adam Formal (Germany came in first, Israel second)
- Bronze, Doubles – Eric Finkelstein/Adam Formal (Germany came in first, Israel second)
- Bronze, Singles – Eric Finkelstein (Marius Wechsler and Adam Formal made quarterfinals of Singles)

Women’s World Cup

Urumqi, China • Sept. 29 - Oct. 1, 2006
Photo By: www.ittf.com

Final – Guo Yan (CHN) d. Zhang Yining (CHN), -13,10,-9,-7,7,8,6; SF: Zhang d. Li Jia Wei (SIN), 9,-11,-8,6,7,5; Guo d. Tie Yana (HKG), 9,6,8,-12,-8,8; 3rd: Li Jia Wei d. Tie Yana, -8,12,4,9; QF: Zhang d. Viktoria Pavlovich (BLR), 8,6,8,6; Li Jia Wei d. Kim Kyung Ah (KOR), -8,3,6,-3,9,2,6; Tie d. Ai Fukuhara (JPN), 6,5,10,8; Guo d. Li Xiaoxia (CHN), 8,4,10,-10,7.

Preliminaries

Group A: 1st Zhang Yining (CHN), 3-0 (d. Fukuhara, 8,7,6,3; d. Gao, -8,7,6,-11,5,3; d. Osman, 3,2,3,3); 2nd Ai Fukuhara (JPN), 2-1 (d. Osman, 2,2,3,1; d. Gao, 8,3,-3,-7,-14,11); 3rd Gao Jun (USA), 1-2 (d. Osman, 3,6,2,4); 4th Bacent Osman (EGY), 0-3.

Group B: 1st Guo Yan (CHN), 3-0 (d. Pavlovich, 5,6,5,10; d. Lin, -9,5,9,3,1; d. Silva, 2,2,4,7); 2nd Viktoria Pavlovich (BLR), 2-1 (d. Silva, 3,7,7,4; d. Lin, 7,5,-7,9,-13,10); 3rd Lin Ling (HKG), 1-2 (d. Silva, 2,3,4,9); 4th Ligia Santos Silva (BRA), 0-3.

Group C: 1st Tie Yana (HKG), 3-0 (d. Struse, 13,4,10,7; d. Li, 3,6,7,4; Wang, -5,6,1,9,9); 2nd Li Jia Wei (SIN), 2-1 (d. Wang, 4,9,5,4; d. Struse, 5,10,2,-15,-5,3); 3rd Wang Chen (USA), 1-2 (d. Struse, 4,-8,-3,8,5,11); 4th Nicole Struse (GER), 0-3.

Group D: 1st Kim Kyung Ah (KOR), 2-1/-7,5 (d. Karen Li, 6,7,7,7; d. Liu, -6,3,9,4,9); 2nd Li Xiaoxia (CHN), 2-1/-7,7 (d. Kim, -3,3,-8,-8,7,10,8; d. Karen Li, 3,6,6,10); 3rd Liu Jia (AUT), 2-1/-5,7 (d. Li Xiaoxia, 9,-8,-6,-7,7,8,6; d. Karen Li, 4,6,6,-9,4); 4th Karen Li (NZL), 0-3.

World Veteran’s Championships Revisited

Bremen, GER • May 15-20, 2006

Dan Green wrote about the World Veterans in the July/August issue; Filz revisits it here.

What do you say when 3700 players converge on one site for a table tennis tournament? Ach du lieber! That’s what happened May 15-20 in Bremen, Germany. These were seniors from 40 and up, playing at the same facility that the World Team Championships were held at two weeks prior, the AWD Dome. The dome is stunning in view of its size. Three large halls, including a practice facility, was needed to accommodate that many players. 1700 were Germans, and they may have had more but it was cut off at that figure. All you heard was, “I lost to a German.” Sixty countries were represented, the most ever. The surprising thing was that even with such a large entry list, it still ran on schedule. Another surprising thing was a padded playing surface for everything including the practice hall. Where do they get the funds for all of this? I don’t know, but 700,000 registered German players certainly must help.

One especially interesting match was when Ray Fahlstrom from California won a match in the third round of championship singles against a German, 11-9 in the fifth, after being down 0-2 and 6-10 in the third. Outstanding! Now for the misfortune of Frank Dwelly from Boston, he was moving briskly through the Over 80 field when he was forfeited for not showing up for a match he thought was to be played the next day. The Russian who won was definitely not as strong as Frank, so Frank would have most assuredly won the world championship. What a shame.

More information about the tournament can be found at http://senioren-wm2006.tischtennis.de.
US ATT TOURNAMENT RESULTS

Hutchinson Summer Open
Hutchinson, KS • Aug. 19, 2006
Seeded Challenge Round Robin
Class A: 1st Carl Miller; 2nd Chunyen Liu.
Class B: 1st Vic Meredith; 2nd Guy Hendrickson.
Class C: 1st Cortney Spaven; 2nd Mark Hukills.
Under 3600 Doubles
Class A: 1st Vic Meredith/Guy Hendrickson; 2nd Carl Miller/Homer Roman.
Class C: 1st Bob Cockherman/Bruce Bailey; 2nd Toraj Ighani/Cortney Spaven.

Newbury Open
Franklin, TN • Sept. 9-10, 2006
Open: 1st Didi Desouza; 2nd Liedy Handoko; 3rd Ricardo Abril.
Class A: 1st Babak Fakharpour; 2nd Jude Lam; 3rd Shaun Stallings.
Class AA: 1st Brad Williams; 2nd Bill Neely.
Class B: 1st Gan Deng; 2nd Kathy McMillin.
Class BB: 1st Larry White; 2nd Noel Lim.
Class AA Doubles: 1st Larry Thomas/Slawomir Wacalnik; 2nd Liedy Handoko/Robert Chanou.

Shaun Stallings
At Newby Nashville Open

Schaumburg Summer Open
Schaumburg, IL • Aug. 12, 2006
Open: 1st Jason Miller; 2nd Lukasz Fita; 3rd Ivan Popov; 4th Janusz Franczczek.
U2150: 1st John Bian; 2nd Junduo Zhao; 3rd Dobrovil Kljaic; 4th Ivan Popov.
U1900: 1st Patrick Yee; 2nd Jorge Vanegas.
U1700: 1st Rajeev Thakur; 2nd John Oh.
U1450: 1st Ronald Li; 2nd David Peterson.
U1250: 1st Natalia Snigurskaya; 2nd John Drissen.

Newbury Nashville Open
Franklin, TN • Sept. 9-10, 2006
Open: 1st Babak Fakharpour; 2nd Jude Lam; 3rd Shaun Stallings.
Class A: 1st Brad Williams; 2nd Bill Neely.
Class B: 1st Gan Deng; 2nd Kathy McMillin.
Class BB: 1st Larry White; 2nd Noel Lim.
Class AA Doubles: 1st Larry Thomas/Slawomir Wacalnik; 2nd Liedy Handoko/Robert Chanou.

Class AA Doubles: 1st Denis Fritchie/Dinh Le; 2nd Bill Neely/Alex Lecky.

Maryland Circuit
Eldersburg, MD • Aug. 12-13, 2006
Open: 1st Kian Mokhtar; 2nd Dave Jarrin.
Over 40: 1st Julian Waters; 2nd Mark Davis.
U2000: 1st Sutanit Tangyingpong; 2nd Julian Waters.
U1800: 1st Grigory Yasinov; 2nd Nikita Kuzmin.
U1700: 1st Chris Puls; 2nd Bill VanWright.
U1500: 1st Chris Puls; 2nd Amole Gole.
U1300: 1st Andrew Gear; 2nd Scott Barnett.
U1100: 1st Andrew Gear; 2nd Dan Holland.
U3600 Doubles: 1st Kian Mokhtar/Keahan Mokharti; 2nd Julian Waters/Dave Steinbach.

Maryland Circuit
Eldersburg, MD • Sept. 2-3, 2006
Open: 1st Sutanit Tangyingpong; 2nd Yongqiang Zhang.
Over 40: 1st Steve Hochman; 2nd Julian Waters.
U1800: 1st Grigory Yasinov; 2nd Phil VanDusen.
U1700: 1st Phil VanDusen; 2nd Thomas Lo.
U1500: 1st Amole Gole; 2nd Scott Barnett.
U1300: 1st Scott Barnett; 2nd Gary McConne.
U1100: 1st Calvin Lo; 2nd Brian Stohl.
U2800 Doubles: 1st Phil VanDusen/Gary McConne; 2nd Yvonne Kronlage/Scott Barnett.

USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE • November/December 2006
SportsFest X “TEAM” and “Top Gun” Singles

Allentown, PA - July 16, 2006

Article By: Toni Bernstein

Youth movement? The KING is dead. Long live the King.

Normally, the “Team” event would have top priority for our SportsFest tournaments, but the excitement in the “Top Gun” A singles about an unknown, unrated, FIFTEEN-year-old youngster from Japan, Tanyo Sakuraba, must take precedence.

Our “Top Gun” singles follows the Team event. All participants are automatically entered FREE in a single elimination format with a large trophy to first place plus CASH. The top 24 players are entered in the “A” division (with a Final Four RR) and everyone below the top 24 is entered in the “B” division.

Six-time SportsFest champion John Wetzler (2378) was involved in the three most exciting matches of the “A” singles R/R. Back to that later, as the “Kid” from Japan deserves top billing as six players rated 2200+ to 2400 were left in the dust by the “Kid.” In the first round, Tanyo eliminated a 1600 player, lawyer Frank Roth, who actually took a game from the “Kid” (quote: “I think I lulled him to sleep”), then everyone woke up as Tanyo disposed of the #2 seed, Vladimir Iodkovsky. The #4 seeded Christoph Teille, the Minister from Germany, was ad-ministered a defeat by Mike Leshinsky, and because Wally Green, #3 seed, dropped early with a hip injury, Rich DeWitt (four-time MVP) and the six-time champ John Wetzler, set up the Final Four RR. Top-seeded Wetzler, #5 seed Leshinsky, #6 seed DeWitt AND the “Kid.” Wetzler surely was on his way to his SEVENTH championship. Back again to the three most exciting matches:

1. Come from behind match – John Wetzler begins by getting soundly thrashed in the first two games by the always-consistent Rich DeWitt, 3-11, 8-11, then edges out the next three as he resoundingly triumphs, 11-9, 12-10 and 11-5.

2. Nail-biter match – with Tanyo on top over Wetzler, 6-4, 10-8.

3. Seesaw match – a jubilant Leshinsky (didn’t know he had a vertical as he actually leaped about three inches after the match) wins in five over Wetzler, 7-7, 6-8, 9.

The balance of the round-robin matches had Leshinsky over DeWitt in Tour and Tanyo over Leshinsky, also in four. Tanyo and DeWitt? DeWitt wins three straight, 5,10,11. Go figure!

Notable quotes

John Wetzler (rationalizing) – “I ONLY lost the ‘Top Gun’ championship by TWO points if you total my three opponents’ points versus mine. I’m accustomed to winning in Allentown. Coming in THIRD sucks.”

Tanyo Sakuraba – “First place CASH in the Team event (with Wally Green) and the ‘Top Gun’ CASH and a THREE-foot trophy. I tell you, I LOVE this Allentown and America.”

Joe Forro – Winner of the Class B “Top Gun” segment – “Wow! An event for lower rated players and I not only won a trophy, but I even won MONEY. Awesome.”

Mark Fryberger of partner Ramon Barrera – “This Class B ‘Top Gun’ singles will be a breeze for him. They have him listed as 1381 and he’s really rated 1600. Fantastic!” (Barrera lost in the quarters to Forro.)

Art Paolini (Assistant coordinator) – “Near record high temperatures didn’t affect the 15 year old and he didn’t cool down against the hot competition.”

Included with the SportsFest Table Tennis Team & “Top Gun” singles tournament is a Ping-Pong tournament for locals that promotes our Allentown/Liberal Valley area Table Tennis Club, the USATT and the sport of table tennis. The Ping-Pong event went over very well with over 100 matches played and was capably supervised by Art Paolini. Two of the eight participants starting were so impressed with both the Table Tennis/Ping-Pong venues and our club personnel that they joined USATT on the spot.

Accolades for his hard work in making another Allentown tournament a success go to:

Fred Kistler, coordinator; Art Paolini, Fred’s right-hand man; Noga Nir-Kistler, Fred’s LEFT-hand(ed) woman; Assistants Bill Kohut, Fred II Bomberger, Paul Nam, Ron Albright, Frank Roth & Jamie Gonzales; and Helpers Jason, Chris, Ilya, Mr. Duan & son, Wally & Tanyo.

Top Gun A Singles – Final: 1st Tanyo Sakuraba, 2-1 (d. Wetzler, 6-4, 10-8); 2nd Leshinsky, 6-9, 3-9; 3rd Mike Leshinsky, 2-1 (d. Wetzler, 7-7, 6-8, 9); 2nd Mike Leshinsky, 8-9, 6-4); 3rd John Wetzler, 1-2 (d. Wetzler, 3-8, 9,10,5, 4th Rich DeWitt, 1-2 (d. Sakuraba, 5,10,11).

Top Gun B Singles – Final: Joe Forro d. Brad Colas, 7,6,3; SF: Forro d. Gilles Beneyton, 8,7,7, Colas d. Chris Watson, 9,8,10,6.

Class A Teams: 1st Japenglish (Wally Green & Tanyo Sakuraba); 2nd Locomotive (Vladimir Iodkovsky & Mike Leshinsky); 3rd Snake Pit (John Wetzler & Nicholas Wetzler); 4th Bridgeport Bullies (Don Feltenberger & Richard DeWitt).

Class B Teams: 1st Heavy Nospin (Julian Waters & Wei Xiao); 2nd Sweet 16s (Ron Albright, Jim Rutkowski & Frank Roth); 3rd Ironmen (Phil VanDusen & David Steinbach); 4th Phila Phighters (Michael Zukerman, Dennis Spellman & Marvin Plevinsky); 5th Lancaster (Mark Fryberger, Dan Stadden & Ramon Barrera).

Class C Teams: 1st The Odd Couple (Gilles Beneyton & Joe Clark); 2nd PIPS AHOY! (Eric Chen & Brad Colas); 3rd Vestalions (Yu-Zan Chen & Craig Colas); 4th Backhanders (Bill Kohut, Fred Bomberger & Steve Neumann); 5th Terrible Two (Frank Gliotti & Steve Gruszkowski).

Class D Teams: 1st BCE (Bill Schlemmmizn & Chris Watson); 2nd Wannabe Good (Del Locke & Joe Forro); 3rd Coal Crackers II (Ron Pajor & Ken Russel); 4th Over-rated (Jason Ginsburg & Chris Carrino); 5th Basement Alliance (Brett Rynhart & Mark Kokoska).

SpinMania
Shelton, CT • Sept. 2-3, 2006

Open: 1st Yan Jun Gao; 2nd Robert Roberts; 3-4; Yang Liu & Jean-Philippe Palengat.

U2400: 1st Ernest Virgo; 2nd Jean-Philippe Palengat.

U2250: 1st Peter Li; 2nd Marlon Joseph.

U2150: 1st Kelvin DeChese; 2nd Minh Ho Le.

U2000: 1st Mason Yang; 2nd Bill Vogel.

U1800: 1st Nam Tran; 2nd Damian Brewer.

U1600: 1st Charles M Cavicechio; 2nd David Asson.

U1400: 1st Christopher Michaels; 2nd Jennifer Weng.

U1200: 1st Hans Hsu; 2nd Kevin Cheung.

U1000: 1st Awaika Santiago; 2nd Jonathan Reid.

U700: 1st Stephanie Santiago; 2nd Crystal Torres.


Under 17: 1st Kevin Lee; 2nd Louis Sakaemek.

Under 15: 1st Amar Desai; 2nd Sam Godoy Jr.

Under 12: 1st Grant Li; 2nd Stephanie Santiago.

Robert Roberts & Gao Yan Jun

“Is table tennis on Tom Winrich’s mind as he reads Table Tennis Legends, or is it the Guinea Hen on his lap?”

USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE • November/December 2006
Hosted by the Table Tennis Club of Indianapolis (TTCI) and sponsored by Butterflyonline.com, the Indy Giant Round Robin and Two-Person Teams tournament drew a particularly strong field of players.

More than fifty players from six states across the Midwest competed on Butterfly Centerfold 25 Sky tables for more than $1000 in prize money. Saturday’s round robin play consisted of four groups of ten players each, while Sunday included a field of thirteen two-person teams.

Group A in the Over 1800 round robin event was particularly strong, with all but one player rated above 2000. Top seed in the group was U.S. National Team member and 2004 Olympian Mark Hazinski, who handily won the event with a perfect record. Although occasionally reminding his opponent and the inspired crowd of onlookers why he is an Olympian, Mark consistently demonstrated the gracious sportsman that he is by engaging in numerous extended rallies, often allowing his opponent to open first. Second in the group was Mark Artman, 2004 Indiana State Champion, with third place claimed by Arjun Shankaran from the Southern Indiana and Louisville area clubs.

Shogo Nishikawa placed first in Group B of the Over 1800 followed by Jon Bradley, who battled through an injured knee to claim the second spot.

Another notable performance was turned in by Mark Weber in the Under 1850 event. Mark went undefeated in this event as he claimed the top spot in Group C. Second place went to George Moses II from the Dayton TTC. If an “Iron Man” award were given it would be presented to Mark Weber, who completed two ten-person round robin events in the same day (Under 1850 – Group C and Over 1800 – Group B)!

In Group D of the Under 1850 round robin, top-seeded Brad Tempest of the Columbus TTC placed first with a perfect record. Fourth-seeded Kelly Kendle, from St. Peters, Missouri, finished in second place, her only loss being to Brad Tempest.

In the Two-Person Team event, Group A was won by the undefeated team of Mark Hazinski and Mark Nordby, recent coach of the U.S. National Junior Team. Second place was claimed by Mark Artman and Daniel Seemiller, Jr.

The results of Group B in the Two-Person Teams event were marked by some notable upsets. In the seven-team field first place was claimed by the fifth seeded team of thirteen-year-old Stephen Clyde and nine-year-old C. J. Brewer. Stephen Clyde was the only other player in the tournament to turn in an undefeated performance. Second place was won by the sixteenth-seeded team of Ron Inman and Scott Schweitzer.

Over 1800 Group A: 1st Mark Hazinski; 2nd Mark Artman; 3rd Arjun Shankaran.
Over 1800 Group B: 1st Shogo Nishikawa; 2nd Jon Bradly.
Under 1850 Group C: 1st Mark Weber; 2nd George Moses II.
Under 1850 Group D: 1st Brad Tempest; 2nd Kelly Kendle.
Two-Person Teams Group A: 1st Mark Hazinski & Mark Nordby; 2nd Mark Artman & Daniel Seemiller, Jr.
Two-Person Teams Group B: 1st Stephen Clyde & C. J. Brewer; 2nd Ron Inman & Scott Schweitzer.

From Minnesota to Arkansas and from Illinois to Ohio, a hundred players from eight states descended upon the Table Tennis Club of Indianapolis (TTCI) for the 2006 Indiana Open. Held Aug. 26-27 and sponsored by Butterflyonline.com, the tournament consisted of thirteen different events played on Butterfly Centerfold 25 Sky tables with more than $1000 in awards and prize money at stake.

Several notable performances were turned in as play unfolded over the course of the weekend. Don Hamilton, from the Dayton Table Tennis Club, posted a perfect record, defending the Open title he claimed in 2005 as well as winning Under 2250. Eric Schierberg, from the Northern Kentucky Table Tennis Club, dropped just one match in running away with titles in the Under 900, Under 1100, and Under 1300 events. And in the Under 3800 doubles event, the seventh-seeded team of senior Joe Shumaker and junior Stephen Clyde bested the first, second, and fourth-seeded teams en route to claiming first place. Junior Philip Kolb, from Hagerstown, IN, went undefeated to win the Under 1750 event, a feat he also accomplished four months earlier in the 2006 Indiana State Closed Championships.

Results

**Open:** 1st Don Hamilton; 2nd Jian Tan.
**U2250:** 1st Don Hamilton; 2nd Nick Snider.
**U2050:** 1st John French; 2nd Jiawen Bian.
**U1900:** 1st Xin Bu; 2nd Alan Grambo.
**U1750:** 1st Philip Kolb; 2nd Ron Joseph.
**U1650:** 1st Shaun Fitzgerald; 2nd Keyue Chen.
**U1500:** 1st Dave Beery; 2nd Jason Keesling.
**U1300:** 1st Eric Schierberg; 2nd Yakov Peysekman.
**U1100:** 1st Eric Schierberg; 2nd Michael Hon.
**U900:** 1st Eric Schierberg; 2nd Yongjia Pan.
**Under 18:** 1st Stephen Clyde; 2nd Lyndon Ji.
**U3800 Doubles:** 1st Joe Shumaker/Stephen Clyde; 2nd Don Hamilton/David Zhou.
**U3200 Doubles:** 1st Jin Lu/Carl Bradley; 2nd Bob Petty/Larry Clark.
At the 14th annual Decatur Open last year, Soon Chian Lim became the first champion not seeded as #1 in more than a decade.

This year he again started the day as the #2 seed and cruised into the final looking for back-to-back championships. No one had yet successfully defended the title in Decatur’s 15-year history. They still haven’t. Didi De Souza saw to that.

De Souza cleaned up on Alabama champion Adam Brown of Hoover, AL 3-0, while Lim bounced India native Arjun Shankaren of Louisville, KY 3-0. Brown and Shankaren collected $80.

The two-tiered round robin tournament sold out in 18 days (69 spots). For the second straight year, the final two entry positions were auctioned on eBay with the proceeds going to USATT programs. This year’s winning bids were $335 and $202.50. (Regular entry fee into the tournament was $46.)

All tournament participants received a free T-shirt, Gatorade table tennis towel, pizza lunch, Pepsi products all day and a chance at about 30 door prizes totaling more than $1000.

Winning metal ice chest ($125 value each) from Nucor Steel of Decatur were Kareem Oulibenga and Shankaren. Andrew Davis won a Butterfly Memphis Roller bag, compliments of Bumpers. Decatur Daily Staff Writer Kristen Bishop assisted in drawing names for the door prizes.

This year’s two-star tournament saw 71 players from nine states participate with Danya Davis, Bishop assisted in drawing names for the door prizes.

Co-director Chip Patton did a pre-tournament interview on ESPN Radio affiliate WWTM 1400 AM in Decatur, and The Decatur Daily newspaper and NBC affiliate WAFF-TV of Huntsville provided tournament coverage. For more tournament information visit www.nattc.com.

Special thanks go to co-directors Walt Chenaault, Michael Wetzel (NU/CR), and Chip Patton; committee members Jim Norris, Glenda Norris, Fred B. Mitchell II and Dick Cloyd; and the hosts: Decatur, AL Parks and Recreation Department and the North Alabama Table Tennis Club.


Class AA: 1st Shelby Lane; 2nd Phil Yan; 3-4: Andrew Strong & Kareem Oulibenga.

Class A: 1st Danny Crowson; 2nd Carl Lewis Sr.; 3-4: Ed Watts & Mike Bowles.

Class BB: 1st Scott Lane; 2nd Andrew Davis.

Class BB: 1st Dick Cloyd; 2nd David Girder.

Class B: 1st T.J. Nguyen; 2nd Jason Stancil.

The past weekend was a dream-come-true for the Knoxville Table Tennis Club and their fans. This was the weekend for the first in a series of “Foothills Celebrity Open Table Tennis Tournaments.” It began on Thursday evening with KTTC’s featured player and the premier coach in the country joining KTTC’s regular club practice at the Phyllis Wheatley YWCA. On Friday, Dan Seemiller, the Foothills celebrity, his son Daniel and student Joseph Cochran held a six-hour table tennis clinic for 20 players of all levels at the club. Later that afternoon, Danny, Daniel, and Joseph were interviewed by and put on a table tennis demonstration for Channel 10’s “Live at Five.”

Saturday was the big day with a two-star sanctioned tournament which drew 58 players from six states, the farthest one being Arizona. Exactly half of the players were from outside the state of Tennessee and they, indeed, brought fire to the foothills.

The day was highlighted by several upsets. The largest upset came when KTTC’s underdog Kathy McMillen overcame a 771-point rating disadvantage to defeat Amer Shaw (rated 1950), 12-10 in the fifth and final game of the match.

At the end of the match, with Kathy behind 8-10, she scored the final four points. Kathy went on to a second-place finish in Class D with a loss in the final to her club-mate, Ruth Gove, who won the event. KTTC players made a clean sweep of all three places in the D’s.

The highest-level upset was in the Championship Division where Joseph Cochran, with a 100-point rating disadvantage, defeated Dogwood Arts Champion DiDi De Souza, from Atlanta. This was an exciting, hard-hitting, spectator’s match. Even though Joseph won in three straight games, it was a superb battle to the finish, with Joseph winning at 11, 10, and 8. This win sent Joseph, who is almost seventeen, to the final in the Championship Division against his coach and mentor, Danny Seemiller.

The final was characterized by unbelievable serves, topspin drives, counter-drives, deadly pushes, and other impossible-looking shots by each player. This was, without doubt, the greatest display of table tennis firepower ever seen in East Tennessee and, arguably, in the state. Danny, Joseph, and DiDi won first, second, and third place, respectively, in the Championship Division.
2nd Annual John Vos Memorial Doubles Tournament

Eldersburg, MD - July 29th, 2006
By: Mike Branch

The 2nd annual John Vos Memorial Doubles Table Tennis tournament was a huge success once again. John was a fixture on the Maryland table tennis scene for many years. His love for the game, particularly doubles, was well known throughout Maryland table tennis circles and he frequently participated in regional and national tournaments as well. This year’s event drew 13 teams in the two events – eight in Under 2800 Doubles and five in Under 3600 Doubles.

The #2 seeded team of Steve Hochman and Amol Gole achieved a 7-0 record in the Under 2800 event and never dropped a game along the way. The 790 rated Gole clearly played at a much higher level and we expect to see his rating soar the next time he plays a singles tournament. The top-seeded team of Mark Cohen and John McFadden landed the second prize with a 6-1 record. This well-balanced duo played at a high level and even fared well in the higher Under 3600 event later in the day.

Steve Hochman proved once and for all that he has an incredible amount of talent...at choosing doubles partners. In the Under 3600 event, Hochman paired with up-and-coming David Steinbach to win the event with a 4-0 record. This event featured some very hard-fought matches as five tough teams battled for the top prize. Mark Cohen and John McFadden landed the runner-up spot once again as they scored a huge upset over the much higher-rated team of Yvonne Kronlage and Phil Van Dusen. Kronlage and Van Dusen settled for third place.

The day of fierce competition, camaraderie, jokes, tongue-in-cheek trash talk and all-around fun finally concluded... and we realized it contained all of the elements that John Vos loved so much about our incredible sport. We think he would be proud and we already look forward to next year’s tournament. We miss you Jon.

2nd Annual Wild Bill Hickok Shootout

Abilene, KS - July 28-29, 2006
By: George Taplin

The Wild Bill Hickok Shootout in the old Wild West's Abilene Kansas started out with a bang worthy of its name. While players were warming up the members of the infamous Old Abilene Town Gunfighters sauntered into the gymnasium. Soon a ruckus was started over the favors of Miss Becky Sue (Polzella) who was dressed to the nines in period costume to sing the national anthem. Fortunately "Wild Bill Hickok" look-alike Wade Tuxhorn, complete with costume, shoulder-length hair and handlebar mustache, ran the rowdy crowd of gunslingers outside and proceeded to have an Old West black powder justice shootout party that ended fittingly with only Wild Bill standing. The gunslingers received a well-earned warm applause and posed for many memorable photos as the events started inside.

The meltdown event consisted of three rounds of play with winners playing successively stronger opponents to sort out the field into the round-robin of the Championship Six, and Classes A through E. The highlights of the events would have to be several matches in the Championship group. Top-seeded Parviz Mojaverian, (2282) was just back from the Meiklejohn Tournament where he placed in both Over 40 and Over 50 age group events and won the Under 2300 rating event. Second seed and former Olympian Winfred Addy (2203) of Oklahoma City predictably met Parviz in the final. The more consistent play of Parviz won out, 3-1. The surprise of the final grouping was the steady long wins play of Ray Pestridge (69 years old and rated 1866) of Stillwater, OK, who placed third. Ray won the first game against Parviz, who entertained the crowd by saying, “I’m going to have to earn this win, this guy can play!”

In the Open Singles played later in the day Mojaverian and Addy were matched up in the final. By mutual agreement they decided to split the prize money but then put on a show with an exhibition match.

The most improved player of the day was undoubtedly Prakash Thadoni of Wichita State University who won both the Under 1800 and Under 1600 and whose ratings rose 354 points from 1536 to 1890.

The tournament committee wants to thank the City of Abilene Kansas and especially Jane Foltz, Director of the Recreation Department for the cooperation and wonderful facilities.

Class A: 1st Paul Olivier; 2nd Jeff Johnston.
Class B: 1st Chris Salazar; 2nd Jonathan Paretsky.
Class C: 1st T.J. Ighani; 2nd Les Ruthven.
Class D: 1st Cole Ely; 2nd David Chu.
Class E: 1st Neil Brown; 2nd Senthil Subramaniam.
U1800: 1st Prakash Thadoni; 2nd T.J. Ighani.
U1600: 1st Prakash Thadoni; 2nd Larry Figg.
U1400: 1st Shamoor Anis; 2nd Bob Cockerham.
U1200: 1st Kenny Cook; 2nd Jon Redman.
Thrown For A Loop

By Daniel Guttman

Table Tennis was his fickle Goddess - unfathomably alluring yet impossibly distant, cold and tantalizingly out of reach. She would tempt him with daydreams of delicately placed drop shots, ferocious topspin drives and astonishing serves that defied the laws of physics, but he was jolted to the here and now when confronted with the stark reality of table, net and opponent. Then knots.

But Ben was no long-term masochist, for he believed this predictable semi-weekly exercise in self-flagellation at the club was just a temporary sign-post, on the way to ultimate table tennis supremacy - at least within the microcosm of the CJTTC. He was under no delusion that he would ever lord it over the supreme practitioners of the Table Tennis Arts who as soon as it touches down and curves away from the table of its own volition as if it suddenly realized it had missed an urgent appointment.

Methodical as he was, it took Ben weeks to deconstruct the loop so he could analyze its components. Then each element of the shot had to be repeated over and over so that muscle memory trumped the conscious mind. Table Tennis points were so quick that any attempt to consciously command your body to obey a carefully choreographed set of movements was doomed since the instructions would be conveyed to your appendages too late - a millisecond after the ball had already rocketed past you. So painfully and systematically Ben worked on perfecting his loop. At first his game deteriorated. This experience is common even among great golfers who change their stroke until they hone the new one. But Ben patiently stayed the course until his loop started performing as well in games as it did in practice. And then he began winning.

It was at this moment of early triumph that a new member joined the CJTTC. Her name was Aphrodite Kouskouskopolis. The few women at the CJTTC were either taken or God forsaken and Aphrodite was neither. On the contrary, she was the perfect long-legged physical specimen with the personality to match. Her shoulder-length, light Auburn hair bounced when Cretin Dimitrios walked into the club. It was bad enough to give his clients a requested appointment. "Ben, don't you?" would be ignored with the disdain he reserved when the IRS refused to come to the club on Thursdays. His more modest aims were to win consistently in the Tuesday Night League where the competition was less Olympian. His ticket, Ben was convinced, was the mastery of the topspin loop.

A loop is a delicate shot that requires the practitioner to graze the side of the ball with the racquet in an upward motion at high speed. It is the equivalent of a "kiss and run" for which you might be arrested in a social setting - as if you plotted a wet kiss on an unsuspecting girl and headed for the hills before she had the time to blink. The contact with the ball is brief and the margin of error is low. If your timing is anything but perfect, there is a high probability of missing the ball entirely and looking foolish, since you are literally breaking wind in public. Alternately, in a close encounter of the third kind, if you paradoxically contact the ball for too long and too well, you won't impart enough spin and will offer your opponent a fat pineapple which he'll smash back to your ancestors' preferred land of origin. But a perfectly executed loop takes on a beautuous trajectory that floats high over the net and appears to be gracefully sailing far beyond this mortal coil. You would lay 10 to 1 that the ball would never land safely until at the last possible moment it takes an improbable breath-taking half-gainer dive with two twists and hits the table corner. Then, like a runner with a second wind, the ball picks up break-neck speed normally reticent and shy around women, Ben girded his loins and after watching Aphrodite demolish several opponents on her first day at the club, asked her insightfully, "Do you play?" Recovering from this idiocy, since he was not given to small talk, Ben followed up with "Who does your taxes?" Soon Ben was Aphrodite's accountant.

While Aphrodite was a superior player, Ben was just good enough to almost keep up with her. But she was especially fascinated by his steady improving topspin loop. By now Ben could loop from all angles, with both forehand and backhand. Many of his opponents were mesmerized as his shots lazily arched over the net only to kick off in all directions; however they were too rooted to the ground in awe to react. But Aphrodite was moved not by their efficacy but by the aesthetics of Ben's loops. They had all the subtle beauty of a rainbow and, as all ephemera, they lingered only in memory. Shortly Ben asked Aphrodite out to dinner, to talk about her assets, of course.

As their relationship blossomed Ben was surprised to find himself irrationally jealous whenever Aphrodite admired anyone else's game. Even a remark like, "I think he has a nice serve, Ben, don't you?" would be ignored with the disdain he reserved when the IRS refused to give his clients a requested deduction. So Ben was primed when Cretin Dimitrios walked into the club. It was bad enough that Cretin was an Adonis with a thick mantle of black hair, a smile worthy of a toothpaste commercial, broad shoulders and a tapered waist, but he also had a killer loop. The fact that he was Greek too, complicated matters as well. Cretin and Aphrodite would have conversations in their native tongue that Ben could only interpret imperfectly by the understated tics and hiccups of body language. Mutual laughs though did not require the erudition of a linguist for him to decipher a growing bond between them. Moreover, Cretin frequently whispered sweet Hellenic nothings into
Aphrodite’s ear. What Cretin lacked in intelligence he more than made up for in animal magnetism. Ben was worried and rightly so.

Sure enough, it turned out that Aphrodite also started seeing Cretin after hours. Ben had to nip this in the bud, so over dinner with Aphrodite one evening he threw down the gauntlet — sort of. “Aphro,” he said to her, despite the fact that she was not a woman of color, “Do you really think Cretin has a good loop?”

“Well,” she said sweetly, “his loop sometimes does a little dance that gives me, how you say, Goosebumps.”

“That’s just because you are cold, dear,” Ben replied. “I’ll suggest they turn the heating up at the club.”

“That’s not what I meant,” she said, uncomprehendingly.

“Aphro,” he said, “I’ll prove to you I have a better loop. I’ll go head to head in a match with Cretin and you’ll be the judge — winner take all.”

Aphrodite didn’t want to choose between her two admirers, but Ben was insistent that size doesn’t matter though spin does and he wanted to prove it. When Cretin heard Ben explain his proposal she agreed instantly with only one condition. He wanted to wear his sleeveless muscleman shirt during the contest. It was to take place the second Tuesday in November so as not to conflict with Election day, since the CJTTC would be vacant then — all its members being in their respective home precincts, presumably voting for pro-Table Tennis candidates.

The impending category five love-whirlwind with the radiant Aphrodite at the epicenter was a sui generis event, so at the appointed hour on Tuesday the members of the CJTTC flocked as though to a Roman gladiatorial contest but with rubber covered paddles as the weapons of choice instead of tridents and short swords. Ben arrived at the club early and when he unsheathed his racquet he evoked an audible gasp from the multitude. He had replaced his normal inverted-pips, good-control rubber, with a new lightning fast rubber, which was the equivalent of climbing Mount Everest without ropes, oxygen or acclimatization — audacious but death-defyingly foolhardy. Very few players in the world could make the ball obey any command with that rubber, but if one could, the results would be spectacular.

Aphrodite quickly lost face when the astounded Aphrodite with an insouciant glance at Ben he peeled off his warm-ups to reveal his chiseled form. His muscles rippled with the impressive insistence of beach waves on a blustery day. His warm-up shots were metronomic in their rhythmic consistency. His racquet and rubber were conventional but his loops were not. They were deep and they were mean.

Ben should have been worried but when he saw Aphrodite glide into the club he could only think of the magnificent body that was covered by her inconsiderate shape concealing overcoat. By the time Aphrodite had changed into her table tennis attire Ben realized he was in deep trouble, but the die was cast. So he just watched in admiration as Aphrodite effortlessly floated to the table on the balls of her feet, as if someone had pulled her on a carpet to her destination. She laid her racquet on the table and addressed Ben and Cretin.

“I adore both of you,” she said. “But you are like oil and milk, you don’t make a very good drink. I didn’t want to choose between you, but my mother, who taught me how to play, said that a good loop is sacred, and is an indication both of character and earning potential, not to mention it will win many games. This is a better way to pick a man than the tossing of a coin or the pulling of a straw, so this way I choose.”

It had been determined by a cut of cards that Cretin was to begin.

Aphrodite hit a topspin serve to him down the center of the table. Cretin stayed two feet behind his side of the table, reached down and lifted a delicate shot that dreamily made it the opposite right corner where it continued to curve out of sight, mind and Aphrodite’s reach. She sent the same serve to Ben, whose miss-hit return would have topped the second balcony, if there was one. And so it went. Cretin hit nine shots, each a demonstration of artistry and touch. Ben’s nine shots were a demonstration of futility and ineptness. On his tenth try, Cretin outdid even himself and hit the ball so immensely high that when it bounced on the other side of the table, its spin and momentum carried it over Aphrodite’s head and into the audience. Cheers erupted and Aphrodite cooed approvingly.

Ben had one last chance for happiness and redemption. He was already hovering over the abyss and had nothing to lose so when Aphrodite sent her serve over he did something possibly never seen on a table tennis court. He reached down to the floor with his racquet and corkscrewed his body so that when he uncowed his hips it forced him into a violent pirouette that whipped his arm at blinding speed in the vicinity of the ball. The ball was fleetingly touched, but this sufficed for it to fly over the net, hit the table and plow into the temple of the astounded Aphrodite with astonishing force.

Aphrodite quickly lost consciousness, but not before she uttered two words softly several times, “teleios brochos.” Ben’s distress morphed into despair when the paramedics were unable to revive Aphrodite and pronounced her dead. But her final incomprehensible words compounded his agony.

Cretin came over and put his arm around Ben in an attempt at mutual consolation interpreted — “teleios brochos,” he repeated. “She said you hit the perfect loop.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Club</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>CA 2480</td>
<td>Fu, Shu (Sara)</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>644 Grant, Albuquerque, NM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>CA 2465</td>
<td>Zheng, Jiabo</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>644 Grant, Albuquerque, NM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>CA 2366</td>
<td>Lee, Jacqueline</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>644 Grant, Albuquerque, NM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>OR 2326</td>
<td>Lee, Tae-Min</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>644 Grant, Albuquerque, NM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>CA 2326</td>
<td>Lee, Um</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>644 Grant, Albuquerque, NM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>CA 2326</td>
<td>Lee, Yeon-Joo</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>644 Grant, Albuquerque, NM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>CA 2326</td>
<td>Lee, Yeon-Seo</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>644 Grant, Albuquerque, NM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>CA 2326</td>
<td>Lee, Yong-Bok</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>644 Grant, Albuquerque, NM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>CA 2326</td>
<td>Lee, Young-Chul</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>644 Grant, Albuquerque, NM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>CA 2326</td>
<td>Lee, Young-Min</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>644 Grant, Albuquerque, NM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>CA 2326</td>
<td>Lee, Young-Soo</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>644 Grant, Albuquerque, NM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>CA 2326</td>
<td>Lee, Young-Woo</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>644 Grant, Albuquerque, NM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>CA 2326</td>
<td>Lee, Young-Woo</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>644 Grant, Albuquerque, NM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>CA 2326</td>
<td>Lee, Young-Woo</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>644 Grant, Albuquerque, NM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>CA 2326</td>
<td>Lee, Young-Woo</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>644 Grant, Albuquerque, NM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>CA 2326</td>
<td>Lee, Young-Woo</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>644 Grant, Albuquerque, NM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>CA 2326</td>
<td>Lee, Young-Woo</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>644 Grant, Albuquerque, NM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>CA 2326</td>
<td>Lee, Young-Woo</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>644 Grant, Albuquerque, NM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>CA 2326</td>
<td>Lee, Young-Woo</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>644 Grant, Albuquerque, NM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>CA 2326</td>
<td>Lee, Young-Woo</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>644 Grant, Albuquerque, NM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Overview:**
- The table contains a list of 20 players from various states, categorized by gender and age.
- Each player's name, age, gender, and club are listed.

**Additional Information:**
- The table is part of a larger dataset on USA TABLE TENNIS MAGAZINE.
- The data is used for tracking and categorizing table tennis players across different states and age groups.

**Note:**
- The full dataset includes more players and provides comprehensive information to support research and analysis in the field of table tennis.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Zip Code</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Birth Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>91725</td>
<td>Alan, John</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>91726</td>
<td>Alex, Daniel</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>91727</td>
<td>Andrew, Robert</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>91728</td>
<td>Brian, stylist</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>91729</td>
<td>Cameron, Richard</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>91730</td>
<td>Casey, Jack</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>91731</td>
<td>David, Christopher</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>91732</td>
<td>Edward, Matthew</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>91733</td>
<td>Frank, Joshua</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>91734</td>
<td>George, Michael</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>91735</td>
<td>Henry, James</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>91736</td>
<td>James, Sarah</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>91737</td>
<td>John, William</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>91738</td>
<td>Kevin, Trevor</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>91739</td>
<td>Luke, Jordan</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>91740</td>
<td>Matthew, Nathan</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>91741</td>
<td>Michael, Ethan</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>91742</td>
<td>Nicholas, Daniel</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>91743</td>
<td>Olivia, Sophia</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>91744</td>
<td>Patrick, Daniel</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>91745</td>
<td>Rachel, Emily</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>91746</td>
<td>Ryan, Alexander</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>91747</td>
<td>Sarah, Amelia</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>91748</td>
<td>Thomas, Christopher</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>91749</td>
<td>Taylor, Elizabeth</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>91750</td>
<td>Vanessa, Isabella</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>91751</td>
<td>William, Sophia</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>91752</td>
<td>William, Samuel</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>91753</td>
<td>Xander, Benjamin</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>91754</td>
<td>Yvonne, Grace</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information or to order a print copy, please visit the USA Table Tennis Association website.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Zip Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nguyen, Khanh</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>94155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nguyen, E.</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>90028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nguyen, N.</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>92504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nguyen, P.</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>92136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nguyen, A.</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>90036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nguyen, T.</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>90036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nguyen, J.</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>90036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nguyen, M.</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>90036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nguyen, L.</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>90036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nguyen, K.</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>90036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nguyen, H.</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>90036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nguyen, G.</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>90036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nguyen, F.</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>90036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nguyen, E.</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>90036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nguyen, D.</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>90036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nguyen, C.</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>90036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nguyen, B.</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>90036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nguyen, A.</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>90036</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** The table above shows a list of names and their respective states and zip codes.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Tournament Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Contact Person</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 4 -</td>
<td>Arkansas Open</td>
<td>Little Rock, AR</td>
<td>Eugene Atha</td>
<td>501-835-5291</td>
<td><a href="mailto:eatha@swbell.net">eatha@swbell.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 4 -</td>
<td>Northeast PA Open TT Championships</td>
<td>Canton, PA</td>
<td>Dave Dickson</td>
<td>570-759-9814</td>
<td><a href="mailto:d.dickson@bwkip.com">d.dickson@bwkip.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 4 -</td>
<td>Maryland Circuit</td>
<td>Eldersburg, MD</td>
<td>Yvonne Kronlage</td>
<td>410-489-7291</td>
<td>0 Star</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 5 -</td>
<td>Concord Cup Youth Open</td>
<td>Pleasant Hill, CA</td>
<td>Philip Schafer</td>
<td>925-689-7463</td>
<td><a href="mailto:philicki@hotmail.com">philicki@hotmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 11 -</td>
<td>Canton Fall Open Giant RR</td>
<td>Canton, OH</td>
<td>Gary Podis</td>
<td>330-493-4530</td>
<td><a href="mailto:gporgan64@wmconnect.com">gporgan64@wmconnect.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 11 -</td>
<td>Foothills Celebrity Open</td>
<td>Knoxville, TN</td>
<td>Bill Neely</td>
<td>865-577-8668</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ntexasred@cs.com">ntexasred@cs.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 11-</td>
<td>NJTTC November Open</td>
<td>Westfield, NJ</td>
<td>Larry Bavly</td>
<td>908-654-9009</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tournament@njttc.org">tournament@njttc.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 11-</td>
<td>Potomac Open</td>
<td>Potomac, MD</td>
<td>Lixin Lang</td>
<td>301-451-3532</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lixin_lang@excite.com">lixin_lang@excite.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 11-</td>
<td>18th Annual Viducich Stiga Pacific Rim Open</td>
<td>Portland, OR</td>
<td>Jim Scott</td>
<td>503-261-0672</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jschott@laporte-insurance.com">jschott@laporte-insurance.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 12 -</td>
<td>Framingham TTC Open</td>
<td>Framingham, MA</td>
<td>Qiumars Hedayattia</td>
<td>617-669-5585</td>
<td><a href="mailto:contact@massttc.com">contact@massttc.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 12 -</td>
<td>Brooklyn TTC Open</td>
<td>Brooklyn, NY</td>
<td>Nison Aronov</td>
<td>718-421-2200</td>
<td><a href="mailto:garyguzdenko@yahoo.com">garyguzdenko@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 12 -</td>
<td>GVTTC 2006 Two-Person Team Championships</td>
<td>Rochester, NY</td>
<td>MaryBeth MacClaren</td>
<td>585-638-6251</td>
<td><a href="mailto:henry@swbell.com">henry@swbell.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 18 -</td>
<td>FL Open Sunburst Tour</td>
<td>Clearwater, FL</td>
<td>Margo Lindsay</td>
<td>727-669-0899</td>
<td><a href="mailto:gouger39@ao.com">gouger39@ao.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 18 -</td>
<td>Maryland Giant RR</td>
<td>Eldersburg, MD</td>
<td>Yvonne Kronlage</td>
<td>410-489-7291</td>
<td>0 Star</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 18 -</td>
<td>Middle Creek Mini-Circuit Open RR</td>
<td>Apex, NC</td>
<td>Mike Babun</td>
<td>919-462-3931</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mike.babun@townofcary.org">mike.babun@townofcary.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 18-19</td>
<td>3rd Annual Highland Open</td>
<td>Highland, IN</td>
<td>Danny Seemiller</td>
<td>574-654-7476</td>
<td><a href="mailto:vseemiller@earthlink.net">vseemiller@earthlink.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 18-19</td>
<td>5th FIT Open TT Championships</td>
<td>New York, NY</td>
<td>Lily Yip</td>
<td>732-748-9712</td>
<td><a href="mailto:atlanta66@msn.com">atlanta66@msn.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 18-19</td>
<td>SOAR Open Southern Arizona TTT</td>
<td>Tucson, AZ</td>
<td>Les Jones</td>
<td>520-829-3369</td>
<td><a href="mailto:admin@tuousandtennis.com">admin@tuousandtennis.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 24-26</td>
<td>2006 N. American Teams Open Championship</td>
<td>Baltimore, MD</td>
<td>North American Table Tennis</td>
<td>301-738-8250</td>
<td><a href="mailto:info@natabletennis.com">info@natabletennis.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2</td>
<td>Houston Open</td>
<td>Houston, TX</td>
<td>Nghia Vo</td>
<td>832-607-8998</td>
<td><a href="mailto:nghia101@hotmail.com">nghia101@hotmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2</td>
<td>Pensacola Winter Open</td>
<td>Pensacola, FL</td>
<td>L.A. Johnston</td>
<td>850-494-1784</td>
<td><a href="mailto:la@labudkits.com">la@labudkits.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2-3</td>
<td>Maryland Circuit</td>
<td>Eldersburg, MD</td>
<td>Yvonne Kronlage</td>
<td>410-489-7291</td>
<td>0 Star</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 9</td>
<td>Texas Wesleyan Open</td>
<td>Fort Worth, TX</td>
<td>Jasna Reed</td>
<td>817-531-7555</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jared@txwes.edu">jared@txwes.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 9</td>
<td>Power Pong Open</td>
<td>Fountain Valley, CA</td>
<td>Atila Malek</td>
<td>714-540-5162</td>
<td><a href="mailto:powerpong@aol.com">powerpong@aol.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 9-10</td>
<td>NJTTC December Open</td>
<td>Westfield, NJ</td>
<td>Larry Bavly</td>
<td>908-654-9009</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tournament@njttc.org">tournament@njttc.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 9-10</td>
<td>Power Pong Open</td>
<td>Westfield, NJ</td>
<td>Larry Bavly</td>
<td>908-654-9009</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tournament@njttc.org">tournament@njttc.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 18-19</td>
<td>NJTTC December Open</td>
<td>Westfield, NJ</td>
<td>Larry Bavly</td>
<td>908-654-9009</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tournament@njttc.org">tournament@njttc.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 23-24</td>
<td>Central FL Winter Open</td>
<td>Lakeland, FL</td>
<td>Raymond D. Spann</td>
<td>863-965-0760</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rayspann@varizon.net">rayspann@varizon.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 10 -</td>
<td>Framingham TTC December Open</td>
<td>Framingham, MA</td>
<td>Qiumars Hedayattia</td>
<td>617-669-5585</td>
<td><a href="mailto:contact@massttc.com">contact@massttc.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 16 -</td>
<td>Maryland Giant RR</td>
<td>Eldersburg, MD</td>
<td>Yvonne Kronlage</td>
<td>410-489-7291</td>
<td>0 Star</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 20-21</td>
<td>MDTTC Butterfly Winter Open</td>
<td>Gaithersburg, MS</td>
<td>Wei Xiao</td>
<td>204-414-8128</td>
<td><a href="mailto:weixiao42@hotmail.com">weixiao42@hotmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 27</td>
<td>Dixie Open Giant RR</td>
<td>Hattiesburg, MS</td>
<td>Herb Bennett</td>
<td>601-606-6578</td>
<td><a href="mailto:herbbennett@aol.com">herbbennett@aol.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 3</td>
<td>Arkansas Closed</td>
<td>Little Rock, AR</td>
<td>Eugene Atha</td>
<td>501-835-5291</td>
<td><a href="mailto:eatha@swbell.net">eatha@swbell.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 17</td>
<td>Columbus Giant RR</td>
<td>Columbus, OH</td>
<td>Steve Slaback</td>
<td>614-899-1415</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sslaback@columbusrr.com">sslaback@columbusrr.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 17-</td>
<td>NJTTC February Open</td>
<td>Westfield, NJ</td>
<td>Larry Bavly</td>
<td>908-654-9009</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tournament@njttc.org">tournament@njttc.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 23-24</td>
<td>Central FL Winter Open</td>
<td>Lakeland, FL</td>
<td>Raymond D. Spann</td>
<td>863-965-0760</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rayspann@varizon.net">rayspann@varizon.net</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**usa table tennis magazine • November/December 2006**
Growth is good. It is my happiness to report that at the annual AAU Junior Olympics competitions we saw growth, not only in the event but also from the participants. This is, after all, a celebration of youth, a chance for U.S. juniors to compete for Amateur Athletic Union medals and USA Table Tennis honors. In addition to the awards listed below, it’s a pleasure to report as well that the players, coaches and parents honored themselves through their outstanding sportsmanship during the competition.

NATT was, once again, the competition’s organizer. We were joined at the control desk by Wendell Dillon, the highly distinguished International Referee, head of USA Table Tennis Rules and Officials Committee. USATT President Sheri Pittman also attended, both as an avid spectator and presenter of awards at the daily ceremonies.

The AAU was pleased by the 35% increase in participation at the event, which was held in two adjoining gyms at Greenbriar Middle School in Chesapeake, VA. I tend to attribute the increase to a change in the competition format, a change we made after consulting with top Junior coaches around the nation. In previous JO competitions, both the AAU Junior Olympic medals and the USATT Junior National awards have been in categories defined by age. This resulted in a heavy duplication of matches and in many cases, a lack of competitive matches for the players at the top of the ranking list for their age. We decided then, after getting the blessing of both AAU and USATT, to hold the singles matches for AAU Medals in the traditional age categories on Friday, but made Saturday’s play more competitive by ignoring birthdates and gender. We created divisions based on USATT ratings, with each player playing two categories, the lowest rating division for which they were eligible and the one immediately above. This change in format successfully created more challenging play and was roundly applauded by the adult contingent leaders.

Many of the most active Junior programs in America were represented, including David Zhuang’s New Jersey students, Coach Presley’s Georgia unit from the Ben Hill program, Bill Lui and his cadre of Californians, MDTTC’s clutch of VA and MD members and Rajul Sheth’s emerging powerhouse of youngsters from the India Community Center (ICC) in Milpitas, CA. ICC now has 55 youngsters in structured programs headed fulltime by Rajul, a former Gujarat State Men’s Singles champion in India. With 13 of his charges in play, they won an impressive 13 medals (6 Gold, 3 Silver and 4 Bronze).

The single best performance belonged to the Joel Ferrell Award Winner, Tanyo Sakuraba of Scarsdale, NY. The Gold Medalist in Boys’ Under 16, Tanyo also won Division B and came second in Division A, losing only two matches in the entire tournament, once to Thomas An, a match he avenged, and once to Joseph Wang, in the Division A finals, having beaten Joseph in two other meetings.

Next year’s event will be in Knoxville, TN. Information about the JO Games, including past winners of the competitions and schedules for the 2007 Games is available online at www.aauirogames.org.
THE OPTIMUM SPHERE
by STIGA

"LOOKING GOOD, FEELING GREAT"

This summer STIGA, The Table Tennis Pioneers and USA Table Tennis sent the first US College team to the WORLD UNIVERSITY CHAMPIONSHIPS in MARIBOR, SLOVENIA.

THE US TEAM IN SLOVENIA
STANDING (left to right): Team Leader Samson Dubina, Head Coach Keith Evans, Adam Hugh, Shashin Shodhan, Han Xiao. SITTING (left to right): Amanda Dubina, Katherine Wu, Laura Leach, Pan Lin.

STIGA

THE TABLE TENNIS PIONEERS
ping-pong.com/ttponiors | 1-800-319-PING (7464) | ttponiors@ping-pong.com
RESULTS

JUNIOR NATIONALS

Division A
1st Joseph Wang Jr.; 2nd Tanyo Sukuraba

Division B
1st Tanyo Sukuraba; 2nd Kevin Lee

Division C
1st Matthew D. Lee; 2nd Vincent G. Banli

Division D
1st Alison Wu; 2nd Anna Ka Po Ho

Division E
1st Kayruang Wang; 2nd Keahan Mokhtari

Division F
1st Xing Xiong; 2nd Nathan J.Kung

Division G
1st James Wu; 2nd Victor Kretov

Division H
1st Jonathan Orbell; 2nd Victor Kretov

Division I
1st So Justin; 2nd Amit Patel

Division J
1st Elissa Lin; 2nd Jackson Liang

Division K
1st Gabriel G. Lu; 2nd Erica Tran

Division L
1st Joey M. Lomonaco; 2nd Tong Tong Gong

JUNIOR NATIONALS

Division A
1st Joseph Wang Jr.; 2nd Tanyo Sukuraba

Division B
1st Tanyo Sukuraba; 2nd Kevin Lee

Division C
1st Matthew D. Lee; 2nd Vincent G. Banli

Division D
1st Alison Wu; 2nd Anna Ka Po Ho

Division E
1st Kayruang Wang; 2nd Keahan Mokhtari

Division F
1st Xing Xiong; 2nd Nathan J.Kung

Division G
1st James Wu; 2nd Victor Kretov

Division H
1st Jonathan Orbell; 2nd Victor Kretov

Division I
1st So Justin; 2nd Amit Patel

Division J
1st Elissa Lin; 2nd Jackson Liang

Division K
1st Gabriel G. Lu; 2nd Erica Tran

Division L
1st Joey M. Lomonaco; 2nd Tong Tong Gong

JUNIOR NATIONALS

Division A
1st Joseph Wang Jr.; 2nd Tanyo Sukuraba

Division B
1st Tanyo Sukuraba; 2nd Kevin Lee

Division C
1st Matthew D. Lee; 2nd Vincent G. Banli

Division D
1st Alison Wu; 2nd Anna Ka Po Ho

Division E
1st Kayruang Wang; 2nd Keahan Mokhtari

Division F
1st Xing Xiong; 2nd Nathan J.Kung

Division G
1st James Wu; 2nd Victor Kretov

Division H
1st Jonathan Orbell; 2nd Victor Kretov

Division I
1st So Justin; 2nd Amit Patel

Division J
1st Elissa Lin; 2nd Jackson Liang

Division K
1st Gabriel G. Lu; 2nd Erica Tran

Division L
1st Joey M. Lomonaco; 2nd Tong Tong Gong

JUNIOR NATIONALS

Division A
1st Joseph Wang Jr.; 2nd Tanyo Sukuraba

Division B
1st Tanyo Sukuraba; 2nd Kevin Lee

Division C
1st Matthew D. Lee; 2nd Vincent G. Banli

Division D
1st Alison Wu; 2nd Anna Ka Po Ho

Division E
1st Kayruang Wang; 2nd Keahan Mokhtari

Division F
1st Xing Xiong; 2nd Nathan J.Kung

Division G
1st James Wu; 2nd Victor Kretov

Division H
1st Jonathan Orbell; 2nd Victor Kretov

Division I
1st So Justin; 2nd Amit Patel

Division J
1st Elissa Lin; 2nd Jackson Liang

Division K
1st Gabriel G. Lu; 2nd Erica Tran

Division L
1st Joey M. Lomonaco; 2nd Tong Tong Gong

JUNIOR NATIONALS

Division A
1st Joseph Wang Jr.; 2nd Tanyo Sukuraba

Division B
1st Tanyo Sukuraba; 2nd Kevin Lee

Division C
1st Matthew D. Lee; 2nd Vincent G. Banli

Division D
1st Alison Wu; 2nd Anna Ka Po Ho

Division E
1st Kayruang Wang; 2nd Keahan Mokhtari

Division F
1st Xing Xiong; 2nd Nathan J.Kung

Division G
1st James Wu; 2nd Victor Kretov

Division H
1st Jonathan Orbell; 2nd Victor Kretov

Division I
1st So Justin; 2nd Amit Patel

Division J
1st Elissa Lin; 2nd Jackson Liang

Division K
1st Gabriel G. Lu; 2nd Erica Tran

Division L
1st Joey M. Lomonaco; 2nd Tong Tong Gong

Division A
1st Joseph Wang Jr.; 2nd Tanyo Sukuraba

Division B
1st Tanyo Sukuraba; 2nd Kevin Lee

Division C
1st Matthew D. Lee; 2nd Vincent G. Banli

Division D
1st Alison Wu; 2nd Anna Ka Po Ho

Division E
1st Kayruang Wang; 2nd Keahan Mokhtari

Division F
1st Xing Xiong; 2nd Nathan J.Kung

Division G
1st James Wu; 2nd Victor Kretov

Division H
1st Jonathan Orbell; 2nd Victor Kretov

Division I
1st So Justin; 2nd Amit Patel

Division J
1st Elissa Lin; 2nd Jackson Liang

Division K
1st Gabriel G. Lu; 2nd Erica Tran

Division L
1st Joey M. Lomonaco; 2nd Tong Tong Gong

JUNIOR NATIONALS

Division A
1st Joseph Wang Jr.; 2nd Tanyo Sukuraba

Division B
1st Tanyo Sukuraba; 2nd Kevin Lee

Division C
1st Matthew D. Lee; 2nd Vincent G. Banli

Division D
1st Alison Wu; 2nd Anna Ka Po Ho

Division E
1st Kayruang Wang; 2nd Keahan Mokhtari

Division F
1st Xing Xiong; 2nd Nathan J.Kung

Division G
1st James Wu; 2nd Victor Kretov

Division H
1st Jonathan Orbell; 2nd Victor Kretov

Division I
1st So Justin; 2nd Amit Patel

Division J
1st Elissa Lin; 2nd Jackson Liang

Division K
1st Gabriel G. Lu; 2nd Erica Tran

Division L
1st Joey M. Lomonaco; 2nd Tong Tong Gong

JUNIOR NATIONALS

Division A
1st Joseph Wang Jr.; 2nd Tanyo Sukuraba

Division B
1st Tanyo Sukuraba; 2nd Kevin Lee

Division C
1st Matthew D. Lee; 2nd Vincent G. Banli

Division D
1st Alison Wu; 2nd Anna Ka Po Ho

Division E
1st Kayruang Wang; 2nd Keahan Mokhtari

Division F
1st Xing Xiong; 2nd Nathan J.Kung

Division G
1st James Wu; 2nd Victor Kretov

Division H
1st Jonathan Orbell; 2nd Victor Kretov

Division I
1st So Justin; 2nd Amit Patel

Division J
1st Elissa Lin; 2nd Jackson Liang

Division K
1st Gabriel G. Lu; 2nd Erica Tran

Division L
1st Joey M. Lomonaco; 2nd Tong Tong Gong

JUNIOR NATIONALS

Division A
1st Joseph Wang Jr.; 2nd Tanyo Sukuraba

Division B
1st Tanyo Sukuraba; 2nd Kevin Lee

Division C
1st Matthew D. Lee; 2nd Vincent G. Banli

Division D
1st Alison Wu; 2nd Anna Ka Po Ho

Division E
1st Kayruang Wang; 2nd Keahan Mokhtari

Division F
1st Xing Xiong; 2nd Nathan J.Kung

Division G
1st James Wu; 2nd Victor Kretov

Division H
1st Jonathan Orbell; 2nd Victor Kretov

Division I
1st So Justin; 2nd Amit Patel

Division J
1st Elissa Lin; 2nd Jackson Liang

Division K
1st Gabriel G. Lu; 2nd Erica Tran

Division L
1st Joey M. Lomonaco; 2nd Tong Tong Gong

JUNIOR NATIONALS

Division A
1st Joseph Wang Jr.; 2nd Tanyo Sukuraba

Division B
1st Tanyo Sukuraba; 2nd Kevin Lee

Division C
1st Matthew D. Lee; 2nd Vincent G. Banli

Division D
1st Alison Wu; 2nd Anna Ka Po Ho

Division E
1st Kayruang Wang; 2nd Keahan Mokhtari

Division F
1st Xing Xiong; 2nd Nathan J.Kung

Division G
1st James Wu; 2nd Victor Kretov

Division H
1st Jonathan Orbell; 2nd Victor Kretov

Division I
1st So Justin; 2nd Amit Patel

Division J
1st Elissa Lin; 2nd Jackson Liang

Division K
1st Gabriel G. Lu; 2nd Erica Tran

Division L
1st Joey M. Lomonaco; 2nd Tong Tong Gong
Born in July of 1993, Anthony Joshua (Call me AJ) Brewer is the son of George and Brenda Brewer. As of this writing, he is also the #3 under 14 boy in America (#1 earlier this year), sporting a rating of 2231 with a lifetime high of 2303, remarkable given the relatively few years he’s been playing. An all-around athlete, AJ is also a well-adjusted and well-behaved young man. Here’s what he had to say when he caught up to him after the U.S. Open this past summer.

**How were you introduced to the sport of Table Tennis?**
My Dad played at the club and one night, when I was eight, he asked if I wanted to come, too. It was so much fun that I joined the team.

**So you latched on from the start, no one had to push you?**
Just my Dad, but I can beat him.

**At 2200+ you can beat a lot of people besides your Dad.**
Yup.

**Were you serious from the start, or did that come later?**
I got serious about improving right from the start. Danny Seemiller is my coach and working with him has been great. I owe a lot to Danny. We’ve been working with him since before I played my first tournament. Being nationally ranked is great, but an Olympic Gold Medal is my goal.

**That’s a lofty goal. So how much training have you been doing?**
Well, this summer I went to Texas, the United Arab Emirates and China for the China Junior Championships. I train about three hours a day during the school year, but when school is out I train at home because our club is in a school.

**Fifteen hours a week! That’s intense.**
I play baseball too. I play shortstop and I pitch.

**Have you ever been to the Olympics?**
No. I have seen them on TV though.

**What areas of your game are you working on to reach that level?**
I need to get bigger and stronger, improve my backhand loop and be able to move quicker. Speed and consistency are the two biggest things.

**What equipment have you chosen?**
I am grateful to be a Tibhar sponsored player. I use the Speedy Spin Premium on both sides of a Samsonov Alpha blade.

**In Charlotte, you lost a Junior final to Don James Alto. What’s your lifetime record against him?**
I haven’t beaten him yet. He’s a really good player. I enjoy our matches, but I haven’t managed to come out on top yet. I plan to, though.

**I’ve been impressed by your on-court behavior. Do you ever just “lose it” and act out?**
Sometimes I do come unglued. I get disappointed after a hard loss, who doesn’t? I don’t scream or cuss the umpire or anything, I do toss my racket sometimes. I don’t like losing.

**So what’s for breakfast?**
Usually just a bowl of cereal and some orange juice.

**What brand?**
Nothing special.

**Hey you might get an endorsement deal or something ... Frosted Flakes? Captain Crunch? You could probably up their sales with a statement....**
(Laughs) All of them. Too many to name.

**What music you listen to these days? Into Beethoven?**
No!! It’s 97.9 around here, I think. I just choose music based on how good it is, not on the artist.

**What’s the worst class to sit through in school?**
Science. Math and Gym I don’t mind.

**What’s the last movie you saw?**
In a theater? Probably like “Too Fast, Too Furious.”

**Okay, last one. At school do your classmates know you are a table tennis champion? Do they respect that or do you have to explain it?**
Yeah, other kids ask me about it so I explain it. I really have to explain it and then some think I am making it sound harder than it really is. Mostly, they just don’t get it, how difficult it is.
This venerable Four Star, an annual jewel in the STIGA North American Tour, had excitement, great attendance, fun and a noteworthy and historic outcome. For what else could you ask? Held in the Werblin Recreation Center of Rutgers University, the tournament, sponsored by Table Tennis Pioneers, Gerflor and Senoda, attracted 222 participants who competed under the supervision of Referee Pat Collins. Collins earned his keep by adjudicating the entire field for two days, enforcing dress codes, settling disputes and ruling on whether or not a match had been played voluntarily and should be ratings eligible. It was the sort of work that makes you grateful for USATT Officials and reminds us that there is more to that job than a great seat at the Final.

What a final it was, too! For the first time in STIGA Tour history, a woman won the Open Singles Title! Wang Chen played magnificently in shattering the “glass ceiling” to become the first woman to take the big check since the series began in 2000. Shaking off whatever impact her upset loss in Women’s Singles at the U.S. Open may have had, she was a perfect 6-0 in the Open here, disposing of Xavier Therien, Salmon Dill, Li Yuxiang and Gao Yan Jun in her path to the top. Her backhand play was especially strong and consistent in capturing the title match. She made it a double dip by defeating Lily Yip to take the Women’s title as well.

Lim Ming Chui had a wonderful tournament as well, reaching the Open Singles Second Stage RR groups as a qualifier, placing
second in the Over 40 to Li Yuxiang, and defeating Simon Shtofomaker for the Over 50 crown. Gary Gudzenko is still amazingly spry and made the Over 60 title his against Edward Watts in a tight match to complete the slate of Sol Feingold Memorial Senior Events.

Robert Roberts is an attractive and stylish player, and his Under 2500 final against Shawn Embleton was a real barnburner! Scores of -12,9,10,8,-5,6 can only begin to indicate the high level play here. It's obvious that Shawn has definitely elevated his play of late as he also captured the Under 4200 Doubles with his partner Chip Saxe and defeated Raghu Nadmichettu in seven games for the Under 2375 title. For his part, Raghu was seemingly everywhere! In addition to the match above, he came second in Under 4200 Doubles with Evan Anderson, defeated Canada's Joji Yamazaki 11-3 in the seventh for Under 22 Men's honors, and made the Open Singles Second Stage RR as a qualifier where Shawn Embleton hung a second loss on him, 13-11 in the seventh. Raghu gained 47 ratings points at this tournament, losing to only three players, Samson Dubina, Gao Yan Jun and Shawn Embleton, although Shawn got him three different times! Shawn split his two matches with Samson Dubina and established himself as a solid 2400 player.

Kevin Kuznetzow found himself second in two categories of the Ying-Lo Junior competitions, the Under 16 going to Kevin Ma and the Under 18 to Joseph Wang. Angel Alicea similarly found himself two finalist trophies, in the Under 1250 where he lost to Michael Malone and the Under 1100 where Ashley Futrell Jr. overcame a 20-18 first-game setback to win in six. Ashley Futrell III posted a seven-game triumph against Spencer Friend to win the Under 800 title and give them two trophies for the trip home.

The tournament was enlivened by sharing table space on Sunday with Barry Dattel's ZhiYu Cup Teams competition and by the presence of the irrepressible Lily Yip, the STIGA vendor for the tournament. Lily made hot clamshell meals available, a service greatly appreciated by the hard-playing attendees. Chris, Tom, Matt and I served as registration and control desk staff. As we loaded the STIGA Expert tables for the trip home, we reflected on the continued support the playing community has showii NATT events and the historic victory we had witnessed.

On to California and the remaining events of the 2006 STIGA North American Tour for us! And sweet dreams of points gained and lost for our playing faithful.
It is always a pleasure to be involved with the University of California at Berkeley, their table tennis club and their liaison Yau-Man Chan! This was the second event in 2006 that NATT operated in the Recreational Sports Facility and the volunteerism and eager cooperation they provided was invaluable to the tournament's success. In exchange for use of the hall, NATT made donations to the Board of Regents that pay for the student's use of that same room for the entire school year. It seemed like a fair deal for both parties.

We were warmly welcomed not only by the students, but also by the 268 tournament players who played 1100 rated matches in the two days. It was a crowded, happy hall, with a shortfall of chairs being the major complaint. California players were, as always, excellent sports and followed tournament policies to a "T," allowing the event to stay on time despite the heavy match load and inevitable conflicts for advancing players. In fact, the 1100 matches made the event roughly half the size of the U.S. Open, but ran in just two days on 30 tables. Dr. Azmy Ibrahim did a first-rate job as the Referee, and assembled a supporting staff of umpires (Kenny Tiem, Irina Hellwig, Saul Weinstein, and Yelena Karshhted) who were courteous, firm and fair in their supervision.

Sponsored by Table Tennis Pioneers, Senoda and Gerflor, featuring the Ying-Lo Junior Competitions and Sol Feingold Memorial Senior categories, the Berkeley Open had an outstanding array of table tennis talent on display. Local pride was very much in evidence asupilias loyalist Bruce Liu pointed to his home club's dominance in rating events, while Rajul Sheth's India Community Center kids dominated junior and beginner categories. With all the active programs and clubs in the region, it was an honor to provide a well-organized competition for them all.

Much of the pre-tournament “buzz” focused on a potential rematch in Open Singles between Barney J. Reed and Stefan Feth, since Barney had upset Stefan at July's Sacramento Open. Added into the mix were Ben Johnson, Khoa Nguyen, Freddie Gabriel, Misha Kazantsev and the New Yorker, De Tran. It seems that every time I turn around there is another fresh face for me here, some great player newly arrived that I have not seen before. It wasn't Larry Bavlly, who made the trip all the way from New Jersey in quest of fresh opponents and was the Over 40 finalist, losing to Rudy Miranda. Here the player “new to me” was Zheng Jiaqi, Women's Singles Champion by virtue of a four straight trouncing of Nan Li and U-22 titlist over Jackie Lee. Jackie is not only a great player but also a personable and engaging young lady. She is near the end of her studies at UC Berkeley and expects a degree in Architecture in the near future. It's impossible not to wish her the best.

Open Singles RR Groups:
The Open Singles Round Robin Groups were extremely competitive. Of all the qualifiers, Zheng Jiaqi came closest to reaching the Quarterfinals, finishing third in her group, where Ben Johnson, by virtue of a seven-game loss on Auria and jumped into the Quarterfinals himself.

Quarterfinals:
Spectators were treated to outstanding matches on Sunday. Barney beat Freddie 8,10,5,10 in their Quarters, while Khoa demonstrated that Jeff Huang still had some things to learn, 6,12,7,6. Stefan Feth showed his World Ranked status in four over De Tran, 8,6,8,5. Misha Kazantsev and Ben Johnson, however, provided the most drama. Things appeared to be all Ben's way as he won the first three games by increasing margins, 10,9 and 4. Misha wasn't going away so easily though to the delight of the onlookers broke back with three games in a row of his own, 9,9, and 8! The decisive game gave us more of the same attacking and top spin but with Ben Johnson prevailing 11-8 in the seventh. Wiping the sweat away afterward, Ben was beaming and said, "This is what I play for. That was fun." Okay, I guess you have to be a bit perverse to play this sport anyway.

Semifinals:
In the Semifinals, Khoa and Barney got off to a good start, but a bad ending, splitting the first two games, 11-6 for Khoa and 11-3 for Reed. A hard-fought third game landed in Khoa's column 14-12 and gave him a pivotal turning point. Somewhere in the fourth game, which he lost 11-5, Barney claimed that a service let had occurred, but the umpire indicated nothing. Barney appealed to Khoa who said it was good so far as he saw it. Barney's belligerent streak emerged, but certainly didn't play well with the onlookers, who now greeted every point Barney won with stony silence and were enthusiastic for Khoa as he closed the match out in five games, winning game five 11-9.

Ben Johnson gave Stefan a good tussle, taking game four in the other semifinal, but Stefan Feth had too many tools for Ben to hang in. Feth made the final with his 5,9,9,8,6 victory.

Final:
The Open Singles Final saw Stefan turning back all of Khoa's proposed solutions with a straight-game victory, 5,8,5,8. It was definitely Stefan's "A game" on display, and while Khoa's partisan backers graciously acknowledged the skill on display, there wasn't much dramatic tension involved as Stefan added the Berkeley Open title to the Western Open honors he won in the spring. Conspicuous professionals, the two men shook hands post-match with smiles. "It's not easy doing what I've been doing," Stefan explained later. "I am not in world-class training anymore, yet everyone expects me to win. If I lose, everyone asks 'What is wrong with me?' but if I win everyone says, 'So What?' I cannot win rating points but I can lose them yet I go out and risk my reputation and my dignity and keep playing the tournaments. I worry that perhaps people will not know how well I have played. Do you think I get credit for matches that I win?" I suppose Stefan has a very good point, it is hard to be the favorite. But if you can face De Tran, Ben Johnson and Khoa Nguyen in succession and only lose one game in the process, then you should be able to hold your head up as Berkeley Open Champion.

So the tournament wound to a close, leaving only one event remaining on the 2006 STIGA North American Tour. For all that is left now is the Tour Finals at Stanford University in October! There will feature the best players in a showcase event in an arena setting. Hopefully, win or lose, everyone will enjoy that spotlight and the expanded prize money offered there. For those standing in the pressure of that glare, I can only say that you have our admiration and respect, regardless of the outcome.
**RESULTS**

**Open – Final:** Stefan Feth d. Khoa Nguyen, 5,8,5,8; SF: Feth d. Ben Johnson, 5,9,9,-8,6; Nguyen d. Barney J. Reed, 6,3,12,5,9; QF: Feth d. De Tran, 8,6,6,5; Nguyen d. Jeff Huang, 6,12,7,6; Johnson d. Misha Kazantsev, 10,9,4,-9,-9,-8,8; Reed d. Freddie Gabriel, 8,10,5,10.

**Open Doubles:** Stefan Feth/Nan Li d. Auria Malek/Barney J. Reed, 8,4,-9,6.

**Women:** Jiaqi Zheng d. Nan Li, 6,8,6,4.

**Rating Events**

- **U2500:** Misha Kazantsev d. Auria Malek, 6,-7,-5,8,11,9.
- **U2375:** Kyna Fong d. Earl James Alto, 9,-9,9,9,-10,8.
- **U2250:** Shing-Li Sung d. Voltaire Benedickto, 7,6,7,-6,9.
- **U2125:** Nelson Yu d. Adam Bobrow, 3,-9,9,4,6.
- **U2000:** Wayne K. Lo d. Johnny Huang, 9,-8,7,7,6.
- **U1850:** Bo Ding d. Raymond Chau-Man Yip, 3,5,7,5.
- **U1700:** Irina Furakeva d. Aaron Hui, 14,9,9,-7,12.
- **U1550:** Andy Lin d. Thomas Lambert, 10,4,10,4.
- **U1400:** Thomas Lambert d. Dennis Lui, 10,-8,9,8,-3,-8,10.
- **U1250:** Xiaohan Huang d. Brett Jackson, 6,8,9,-8,7.
- **U1100:** Justin So d. Raphael Lanzona, 11,6,-9,5,7.
- **U950:** Justin So d. Amit Patel, 7,4,6,-9,12.
- **U800:** Jun Zhang d. Prachi Thakur, 3,6,4,6.
- **U4200 Doubles:** Spencer Chase/Vincent Tai d. Bruce Liu/Shing-Li Sung, 8,6,8.
- **U3200 Doubles:** Harvey Gotliffe/Haeckie Honda d. Natalie Sun/Lily Zhang, 7,-7,4,-6,11,6.

**Feingold Memorial Senior Events**

- **Over 40:** Rudy Miranda d. Larry Bavly, 4,8,6,10,-7,6.
- **Over 50:** Suguru Araki d. Peter Chen, 7,-8,6,8.
- **Over 60:** Maol Lin Zhao d. Kent K. Leung, 6,9,-5,6,8,6,8.

**Ying/Lo Junior Competitions**

- **Under 22 Men:** Misha Kazantsev d. Auria Malek, 4,7,-7,9,-5,8,9.
- **Under 22 Women:** 1st Jiaqi Zheng; 2nd Jackie Lee.
- **Under 18 Boys:** Misha Kazantsev d. Don James Alto, 7,9,-4,-9,5,6.
- **Under 18 Girls:** 1st Quanying Su; 2nd Stephanie Chow.
- **Under 16 Boys:** Don James Alto d. Derrick Poon, 8,0,-9,0.
- **Under 16 Girls:** Alicia Wei d. Lily Zhang, 4,6,-2,9,4,6.
- **Under 15 Boys:** Vivek Ramakrishnan d. Anand Engineer, 7,8,-7,5,8,-7,7.
- **Under 13 Girls:** Lily Zhang d. Natalie Sun, 5,-6,5,4,10.
- **Under 10 Boys:** Aashay Patel d. Aarsh Vyas, 9,12,8,9,6.
- **Under 10 Girls:** 1st Prachi Jha; 2nd Kailyn Kong.
It is time for a national league system for USA Table Tennis, the USATT Team League. To make it happen we need the entire table tennis community to embrace the new USATT Team League. We understand there are many formats and many individual leagues out there, but we want you to be part of this new program. By making the first year huge success, you will be doing your part in creating a strong foundation for the future of the USATT Team League Program.

We have partnered with Stiga and Paddle Palace to further expand our marketing efforts for the following season to target non-USATT affiliated players through information in product packaging and many other associations that can assist us to reach out into the general population. All manufacturers and supporters of the sport are hoping this becomes a success for the further growth and health of Table Tennis in the United States.

Your participation and involvement is very important to us, especially this first year of the USATT Team League. We hope you consider joining! Below is a brief description of the USATT Team League, please visit the website, www.usatt.org/league, click on Team League.

The regular season will begin the first week of January 2007 and continue for 16 weeks. Each team will be part of a Circuit. Each Circuit is based on geography so you and your teammates will have time to discuss strategy during short road trips. Circuits will consist of no more than 8 teams. You will play each team twice, once at home and once away. Two makeup weeks will be built into the schedule, one mid-season and one at the end for inclement weather, unavoidable circumstances, etc.

Meets between Teams are called 'ties,' and the schedule of ties is flexible to an extent, with an entire week being given for the tie to be played.

The two teams have the responsibility of arranging a playing time and location. The Circuit runs as a 'Home and Away' series, where each team will meet other teams in the Circuit twice. Tie sheets, for recordkeeping during play, will be available at the website. Schedules of play are issued by the League Administrator. Results are to be submitted through the Team League website by Team Captains of the winning team.

Franchise fee: $50
This is to ensure your team name is secure and you have a spot for your team in a Circuit.

Season Team Fee:
Can be paid at once for $99 a team.

Playing in the league is inexpensive. Below is a chart of how much it costs per player per team for the entire season, not including the invitations to the Regional and National Championships. Top finishers in the Circuit compete free of charge in the Championships.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Players</th>
<th>Weekly Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$3.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>$2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>$1.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>$1.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>$1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>$1.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Calculated based on 16 week season at $149 per team.
Matches are best 3 of 5 games to 11 points. Team ties are best 5 of 9 matches. Each team will carry a roster of no less than 3 and no more than 8 players.

Championships:
At the end of the regular season, teams with the best win/loss record will be invited to a regional championship. Top finishers from the regional championships will then be invited to compete in the Team League National Championships to be held at the 2007 U.S. Open Championships.

Q: How many players are required to be on a team?
A: At least three (3) players are needed per roster. The maximum allowed is eight (8). A tie only allows three players to compete per team. Smaller team sizes allow you to play more games more often. Larger teams allow you more leeway to have the required amount of players each week without worrying about teammates not showing up for matches.

Q: How do I sign up and find more information?
A: Visit our website at www.usatt.org/league. Follow the instructions. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us at 301-738-8250.

Q: When does play start?
A: The Regular Season kicks off the week of January 1, 2007 and lasts 16 weeks.

Q: How are the teams chosen for the playoffs, who will I play, and when does it begin?
A: After the 16 week regular season, top teams will be chosen to participate in the Regional Championships based on their regular season win/loss record. Top finishers from the Regional Championships will be invited to participate at the National Championships.

Q: This is my first time involved with organized table tennis. What is a league rating and how do I obtain one?
A: League ratings are calculated based on the League Rating Chart and are a determination of your skill. It is different from the USA Table Tennis' Tournament Rating. If you have a tournament rating, it will be used for your league rating. If you have neither rating, you can visit www.usatt.org/league and use the 'self-ranker' section. It is a series of questions that will allow us to give you an initial league rating.

Q: I can't find a teammate, what should I do?
A: Visit our website at www.usatt.org/league and place your name on our team finder. Fill out the short form and your name will instantly be placed on the team finder list.

Q: Do I have to be a USATT Member to play?
A: No. The USATT Team League is open to anyone.

Q: Will League matches impact my USATT Tournament rating?
A: No. League ratings are separate from Tournament ratings. Your Tournament rating is only used as a 'starting point.'
Even after all these years of being involved in our sport I continue to be amazed at the human brain’s ability to process data and formulate a response in as short a time as we can. It transcends what we can measure, because many factors play into it, reaction time being only one of them. Equally – or sometimes more – important is an arsenal of conditioned responses we have acquired over years of training. I am firmly convinced that one of the reasons why the Chinese dominate our sport is that these issues are discussed and incorporated into their training very early. When I was a kid, it may have been just a hint, but in the following years of practice, the thought was always there, and the responses eventually became second nature.

One of those issues is the ball to the middle. First, we must understand that “the middle” does not mean the middle of the table. It’s the spot relative to the player’s body, where the decision is made whether to take a forehand or a backhand. It’s a moving target, which differs from style to style and from individual to individual.

A simple rule puts that decision spot on a line running through the armpit of a shakehand’ s racket arm. For a penholder that decision point lies somewhere on a line through his elbow. But recognizing that line is just the first step. Most good players have a sizeable overlap of the areas they cover with their forehand and their backhand. Depending on their preference, they may choose either. Your job is to determine their preference in order to improve your anticipation. To that end you need to recognize the areas right and left of that line and see how the opponent prefers to deal with them. Someone playing Jean-Michel Saive, for example, will find that there is a substantial area right of that line (as he looks at Saive) that will still induce a forehand shot, while playing Samsonov a wide swath running to the left of that line can still yield a dangerous backhand attack.

In addition to stylistic preferences, the situation in the point affects that decision. In a defensive situation, for example after receiving a serve a little too high or too long, it is likely that a backhand block is the better choice, because the attack shot is probably quite severe and does not allow much time. In an aggressive situation, a weak ball to the middle is often best attacked with a forehand.

Whichever the situation is, we can derive some advantage from knowing these tendencies. It improves the percentages of our anticipation and allows us to take advantage of some other regularities we know. One important one in this context is that it is difficult to take a strong backhand on a wide ball after having just covered the middle with the backhand. Unless the opponent recovers impeccably, he will still be a little off balance, and a weak shot to his backhand can yield a weak return. Conversely – and often even more clearly – if he turned to take a forehand on a ball to the middle, it requires a big effort to get a ball played wide into his forehand corner.

Now, armed with that knowledge, we can look at how to respond to balls to our middle. First, we have to make sure we develop that overlap area as much as possible. I don’t teach the forehand/backhand decision solely based on ball placement, because I find it limits the player’s thinking. I like to consider the whole left two-thirds of the table as potential forehand or backhand territory. That being said, we can’t escape the reality that it’s quicker to move the racket to the right for a backhand block than to turn one’s body to take a forehand, so if you get attacked, you may have no choice. Even so, it will help you to understand that your opponent may know where he opened up a weakness, and so you can anticipate just a little better and deliberately close that vulnerable area.
The picture sequence shows how German National Team member Zoltan Fejer-Konnerth deals with two different balls with similar placement. In the upper row, he deals with the consequence of a poor receive. He drops his right shoulder and slides his upper body to the right. His feet move very little. He blocks the ball with a slight sideways motion to take some power off and gain control over it. Recognizing that he still is on the defensive, he buys some time by stepping back after the block.

In the lower sequence it’s the opposite situation: His serve caused a long, slow receive. He recognizes that and immediately starts the footwork sequence, stepping out to his left, and then attacks the ball with his forehand.

The key decisions in both sequences happen right at the first frame. After that, it’s all execution. As a developing player you can accelerate building your arsenal of conditioned responses by being aware of these decisions during practice – until you reach the point where you don’t really remember thinking it through, and yet, you did the right thing.
THE TABLE TENT PING-PONG

DYNAMIC ONLINE INVENTORY
Over 100,000 items in stock from all major brands.

ASK SEAN O'NEILL
Ask 5 x US Champion Sean O'Neill for equipment and playing advice.

DEALS! DEALS! DEALS!
Biweekly deals, Combo Specials, Holiday Sales, Frequent Buyer Program and more.

PLAYING TIPS
Learn from the best! Our Olympic and National Team Members plus national champions share their playing secrets on our web site and in our newsletters.

SUPERB CUSTOMER SERVICE
“Dear TT Pioneers, You guys are doing a good job, and I really admire the way service works. I received my order last week and everything came to me perfect. I truly believe that you guys are doing a wonderful job. Again, thanks for the good service. Best regards, Timmy L.”

THE TABLE TENT
ping-pong.com/ttpioneers | 1-800-319
Butterfly is proud to announce a real breakthrough in short pip rubber development. Our new Flarestorm Short Pimpled Rubber combines the classic short pip characteristics of quick rebound and flat drives with our High Tension Technology. The result is that short pips attackers now have a rubber that can match the explosiveness of a powerful topspin drive from the fastest inverted rubbers. At the same time, Flarestorm controls your opponent's spin well and offers a high level of control in the short game.

SPEED: 11.0  SPIN: 6.0  GLUE EFFECT: MEDIUM  High Tension