

MDTTC News

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Team photo of Division 12 Champions at the North American Teams: MDTTC players Matt Stepanov, Darwin Ma & Sameer Shaikh (Division 12 Finalists: MDTTC players Ryan Dabbs, Patrick Chen, Spencer Chen, Michael Li & Ronald Chen. Team photo in this newsletter)

Archive of past [MDTTC Newsletters](#)

Welcome to the latest issue of the MDTTC News. As usual, there's lots of news to report and new and ongoing programs, and we hope to see you at some of them. As usual a special thanks to MDTTC sponsors [Butterfly](#), [Go Table Tennis](#), and [James Wu/Long & Foster Realtor](#). Make sure to read my daily table tennis blog - I often write about MDTTC happenings there. And if you have a nice picture taken at MDTTC, email it to me and it might make the newsletter!

-Editor and Coach [Larry Hodges](#)

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Beginning/Intermediate Junior Classes – **NEW SESSIONS BEGIN THIS WEEKEND DEC. 7 & 8!** Drop by MDTTC to register. This class is for beginning and intermediate juniors ages 6-14, with Coach Larry Hodges (with John Hsu and Raghu Nadmichettu assisting), and are held Saturdays 10:30 AM-Noon and Sundays 4:30-6:00 PM. There is also a [Montgomery County Table Tennis program](#) your kids can attend, Thursdays 6-7 PM and Saturdays 9:30-10:30 AM, starting January 23, 2014

MDTTC Christmas Camp

It's coming up fast, Dec. 26-31! Our Christmas camps always fill up, so make sure to reserve your spot early. Here's the info page.

Holiday Hours

MDTTC will be closed on Dec. 25 and Jan. 1, and will close at 1PM on Dec. 31. Other than that the club will remain open during regular hours throughout the holiday season.

Afterschool Program

Starting in January MDTTC will be running an afterschool program that combines table tennis and schoolwork, with courtesy pickups at schools or houses. MDTTC coaches and staff will pick up students after school (from selected areas), and bring them to the club where they will have a one-hour table tennis session, practice time, and do homework with our resident tutors. The academic tutors are Larry Hodges and Wen Hsu. [Here's the brochure](#) with further info, including background on the tutors.

North American Teams

They were held this past Thanksgiving weekend at the Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center at the National Harbor in Washington DC, with 858 players and 213 teams. Here are [complete results](#). (This takes you to the summary page; you can use the drop down menu to see the preliminaries and specific divisions.) Congratulations to the all-MDTTC Division 12 Finalists! Larry's Loopers (named after MDTTC Coach Larry) defeated Team Racket in an extraordinarily close 5-4 final, twice coming back to win matches from down match point. (See Larry's Loopers picture at top. [Here's Team Racket team photo](#))

Potomac November Open Results (Nov. 9-10, 2013)

Open: 1st: Wang Qingliang; 2nd: Chen Bowen; 3-4: Steven Dong and Zhang, Jake; 5-8: Raghu Nadmichettu, Chen, Jie, Khaleel Asgarali, Sutanit Tangyingyong.

U2300: 1st: Jake Zhang; 2nd: Nazruddin Asgarali.

U2150: 1st: Chen Qiming; 2nd: Zhang Jake.

U2000: 1st: Joshua Tran; 2nd: Bob Slapnik.

U1900: 1st: Cheong Si; 2nd: Sergey Satskiy.

U1700: 1st: Tiffany Ke; 2nd: Richard Heo.

U1500: 1st: Anne Chanakya; 2nd: Patrick Chen.

U1200: 1st: Jessica Lin; 2nd: Douglas Harley.

Darren O'Day at MDTTC

Baltimore Orioles pitcher Darren O'Day has been taking regular lessons at MDTTC with Coach Larry. [Here's a picture](#) (L-R: Nathan Hsu, Derek Nie, Darren O'Day, Crystal Wang, Larry Hodges. Photo by Chris Zhang.) He's improving rapidly. Here's a blog entry about [his first session](#).

NEW MDTTC Club Shirts arrived!

MDTTC Team Shirts ([Butterfly Pelucci](#), [Passo](#), [Move](#)) available @ \$29.99! (Retail is \$49.99.) To personalize with your name costs only \$5.99 extra. Color options: lime green, grey, blue, or red. Limited sizes and quantity. [Passo Butterfly Tracksuits](#) a few remaining only \$69.99 (retail \$99.99). Limited quantity.

Rental Space for Corporate and Private Events

MDTTC offers space rental for special corporate and private events. Here is [Facility Rental Information](#), and here is info on [Birthday Party Packages](#).

MDTTC Web and Facebook Pages

Don't forget to see the regularly updated [MDTTC Facebook page](#), and make sure to "like" it! Stop by and see all the photos, read the latest news, or post your own comments. Also see the [MDTTC web page](#) for regularly updated info.

TIP OF THE MONTH: Mentality in a Match and in Practice

By Larry Hodges

This could be a very short Tip, since the mentality in a match and in practice should be the same. So here's the short version: think of a time where you played GREAT. It could be in a tournament or a practice match, or even a practice session. The key is that you played great, and want to play like that all the time. Now think about your mentality when you were playing great, i.e. were "in the zone." You were probably playing almost mindlessly, other than tactical thinking. In fact, you probably were more like a spectator just watching yourself react mindlessly and almost flawlessly. THAT is the mentality you want both when you practice and when you play a match.

So how do you do it? Many think that they only need to reach this state of being in the zone when they are playing serious matches. But that's like saying you only need to have a good forehand in serious matches, and so can goof off when practicing and in less serious matches. Just as you need to develop your forehand in practice and in practice matches, you need to develop this ability to get into the zone by practicing it - and that means doing so whenever you play until it becomes second nature. It is only then that you'll be able to turn it on at will in big matches, because it will then, in fact, be second nature, and just like your other best techniques. Think of getting in the zone as no different than hitting a good forehand. Both are techniques that take practice, and if you want them to be ready in serious matches, you need to practice them . . . in practice.

How do you get into the zone? Basically you have to just let go and let your subconscious take control. When someone loops to you and you block, you don't consciously set the racket angle; your subconscious does this, as well as just about everything else you do when rallying. When

you practice, you are basically training the subconscious to play, i.e. setting muscle memory so that it'll react properly in a match. It's not a static thing; if your opponent does something different that you haven't practiced against, your subconscious will learn and adjust. The key in all cases is to let it do so, since the subconscious is quicker and more accurate than anything you can do consciously. If your conscious interferes by trying to guide your shots, your game will deteriorate. Other than thinking tactics - which the subconscious will pick up on and follow - think of yourself as a spectator and just admire your play. Heck, I sometimes feel guilty when I'm playing well since I feel like I'm not really doing anything other than watching as that subconscious part of me takes control. (But remember - the conscious mind has its role as the tactical leader that the subconscious will follow if you allow it. And yet, even there the subconscious will end up doing most of your tactical work since it will learn to automatically do the right tactical thing. It's smarter than you think!)

Putting aside physical limitations, there's no reason why a player can't be at his best essentially all the time - it's all in the head. When players realize this, as most do after they've played many years, their game goes up dramatically. Do you want to wait many years or learn this now?