

MDTTC News



Baltimore Orioles and MDTTC Players!

L-R - Darren O'Day, Tong Tong Gong, Tommy Hunter, Chris Tillman, Larry Hodges, Adam Jones, Nathan Hsu, Derek Nie (in front), JJ Hardy (in back), Qiming Chen, Miguel Gonzalez, Steve Pearce, Alexi Casilla, Manny Machado, and Troy Patton.

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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/Llewellyn realtor](#). Make sure to read mydaily 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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Come to School Off Day Mini-Camps on Thursday, Sept. 5

MDTTC provides half day or full day table tennis training & study time for school age players on days when they have no schools. We follow Montgomery County Public School calendar. See [Camp page](#) or [click here](#) for details.

Register for Beginning/Intermediate Junior Classes

These classes have been restructured & improved! Starting Sept. 21, rather than pay for ten sessions at a time and coming whenever, players will need to pay for ten-week sessions. The problem with the previous method is we never knew how many players would attend, and so never knew how many coaches to have available. We are also adding progress reports where skills tests are given at the end of each ten-week session. Alternative shorter 60-minute classes are available. Visit [Junior Class page](#) for more details & registration information.

Join MDTTC Ongoing Programs

- **Junior Class.** This is for beginning and intermediate juniors ages 6-14, with Coach Larry Hodges (with John Hsu and Raghu Nadmichettu assisting), and are held Saturdays 10:30AM-Noon and Sundays 4:30-6:00 PM. See the [Group Training page](#).
Group Sessions. While this is primarily for juniors, all ages are welcome - it's about 1/3 adults. They meet on Sat & Sun, 4:30-6:30. The first 30 minutes is practice/warm-up, then 90 minutes of matches. See the [Group Training page](#).
- **Private Coaching,** by Coaches Cheng Yinghua, Jack Huang, Larry Hodges, Wang Qing Liang, Chen Bo Wen ("Bowen"), Chen Jie ("James"), Raghu Nadmichettu, and John Hsu. See [Private Coaching page](#).
- **Leagues.** MDTTC runs three different leagues. Take your pick! They are the [Tuesday and Friday Leagues](#) (for all ages and levels), and the [Elite League](#).

MDTTC Visits the Baltimore Orioles

On Wednesday, Aug. 21, MDTTC juniors were invited to take on the Baltimore Orioles baseball team in their clubhouse locker room, where they have a table. Taking part were Nathan Hsu, Tong Tong Gong, Derek Nie, Qiming Chen (University of Maryland star and club president), and Larry Hodges. They played for three hours, with over half the Orioles players taking part, and all 25 watching at some point. Group photo is at the top of this newsletter. [Here is the complete write-up](#) and links to more photos. [Here's the video](#) from Orioles.com (1:19), and here's video of the [Orioles pre-game show](#) (5:28), with the table tennis in the first 1:53 (including interviews with shortstop JJ Hardy and third baseman Manny Machado, with Nathan Hsu playing in the background), then Manager Showalter explaining why he likes that the players have fun in the clubhouse, and then the rest is about the Orioles.

It was an incredible afternoon. Larry even got to talk with superstar first baseman Chris Davis (who leads the majors in home runs) for 20 minutes about player development, both in baseball and table tennis, while Nathan got to *play* him! (Final record was something like 40 wins for MDTTC, zero for the Orioles.)

U.S. Open Results

Here are MDTTC players who were winners or finalists at the U.S. Open in July. (This should have been in last issue, but somehow got left out. Here's a link to [complete results](#) - set dropdown menu to "2013 U.S. Open.")

- **Charlene Liu:** 1st Over 60 Women, 1st Over 60 Mixed Doubles (with Changping Duan), 2nd Over 50 Women
- **Changping Duan:** 1st Over 60 Mixed Doubles (with Charlene Liu), 2nd Over 60 Men's Doubles (with Hossein Sharifi)
- **Hossein Sharifi:** 2nd Over 60 Men's Doubles (with Changping Duan)
- **Larry Hodges:** 1st Over 50 Hardbat Doubles (with Jay Turberville)

Butterfly MDTTC August Open Results

Congratulations to Chen Bo Wen ("Bowen"), who won the Butterfly MDTTC Open, Aug. 24-25. Here are [complete results](#). Summary results are below. Special thanks goes to Director Charlene Liu and sponsors Butterfly, Go Table Tennis, and James Wu of Llewellyn Realtors.

Open - Final: Chen Bo Wen d. Qing Liang Wang, 5,11,9; **SF:** Chen d. Heather Wang, 3,6,8; Q-L Wang d. Harold Baring, 7,-6,2,-8,5; **QF:** Chen d. Nathan Hsu, 5,8,10; Q-L Wang d. Sutanit Tangyingyong, 5,6,7; Heather Wang d. Reginald Sotero, 3,2,2; Baring d. Bojun Zhangliang, 4,10,8. Early-round upset: Heather Wang d. Larry Abass, -7,10,10,7; Sotero d. Derek Nie, def. (arm injury).

U2400: Nathan Hsu d. Raghu Nadmichettu, 9,6,8.

U2250: Nazruddin Asgarali d. Qiming Chen, -12,-7,8,8,9.

U2050: Julian Waters d. Spencer Ip, -6,8,7,-4,10 .

U1900: Anthony Lewis d. Wesley Duan, -7,10,6,6.

U1650: Leon Bi d. Hal Barnes, 2,-7,7,8.

U1400: Anne Chanakya d. Benjamin Kang, 10,4,-10,8.

U1150: Michael Li d. Sameer Shaikh, 7,11,-8,-10,8.

Under 12: Ryan Dabbs d. Bowen Zhang, 7,6,9.

Join & SAVE \$150: North American Teams Championships (Nov. 29 - Dec. 1)

Want to join a team to play in the biggest teams tournament in the U.S.? The [North American Teams](#) will be held nearby in DC, Nov. 29 - Dec. 1 (the Fri-Sun after Thanksgiving). You can SAVE \$150 by joining a MDTTC team or entering your teams through MDTTC. Players of all levels and ages are welcome! Payments must be made before November 1, 2013 and by checks only, payable to MDTTC. If you are interested in forming or joining a team, talk to Coaches Cheng, Jack, or Larry. For more info, contact [Wen Hsu](#).

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: Blocking Tips

By Larry Hodges

One of the biggest differences between players at any level and players a little below them are their blocking skills. When watching two attackers of about the same level play, often the quickest way to judge who is the stronger player is by whoever handles the other's attack better, i.e. who blocks better. Or watch the best players in the world, especially the Chinese, and when they aren't counterlooping, watch how proficient and consistent they are blocking. Spectators often see the flashy attack shots, but often the biggest difference between these top players and those a level weaker are their blocking games. Here are twelve tips on improving your blocking game. (These are primarily for inverted and short pips players.)

1. Be quick and decisive when blocking. Blocking is not for the weak of heart, and is not a passive shot. Even soft blocks should be aggressively soft, i.e. a change of pace, not just a weak block.
2. Block aggressively against loops that land short and against slow loops. If you block these passively, you'll face the consequences. Loops that land short are easy to attack (with aggressive block, smashes, or counterloops), while if you return a spinny loop passively the spin takes on your racket more, making you less consistent.
3. Keep your blocks deep unless you are dead blocking. Deep blocks force the opponent off the table, cut off their angles, and give yourself more time to react to their next shot. Shorter blocks are usually easy putaways for opponents who are in position.
4. Block to all three spots - wide corners and opponent's middle, where they have to decide whether to use forehand or backhand. Avoid blocking anywhere else. Why would you?

5. Often change directions at the last second. This is especially easy and effective on the backhand, in particular by aiming wide to the backhand, then blocking aggressively to the wide forehand at the last second.
6. Against faster loops use the opponent's own speed to redirect the ball back aggressively. Think of it as a video or pinball game.
7. Blocking at the higher levels requires just as much footwork as attacking. Be light on your feet, and step to the ball; don't reach except as a last result.
8. Master the forehand down-the-line block. Many players are handicapped by only being able to block forehands crosscourt. This turns them into punching bags for opponents who know where your next shot is each time.
9. Learn to change the pace with dead blocks, and perhaps chop and sidespin blocks. But if you are going to use these shots, practice them both in drills and practice matches.
10. Consider learning to topspin your blocks, essentially mini-loops. Many players don't realize that many or most top players block with topspin off the bounce, almost mini-loops.
11. Study opponents to see how soon you can pick up where they are placing their attacks. If you do this, your subconscious will pick up on it, it'll become second nature, and you'll begin to react sooner. You don't need fast reflexes to have fast reactions; fast reactions come from proper training over a period of time.
12. When you force a weak ball with your blocks, change from a blocking mentality to attack mode. Far too many players force an opponent into making a weak return - and then continue blocking. Your blocking has done its job; now's the time to attack!!!