

MDTTC News

Dear members & friends:

Thank you all for making MDTTC a special place!

Wishing you & your family: Happy Holidays and a Prosperous New Year!

Cheng, Jack, Charlene, Larry, Jeffrey, Qingliang, Bowen, Ruichao, John, Raghu, Poching & Wen



MDTTC October Open Champions!

[Archive of Past MDTTC Newsletters](#)

Welcome to the 31st 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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USATT Election – Support Coach Larry Hodges!

Larry Hodges is running for the USATT Board of Directors. All USATT members age 18 & over should receive an email at the start of December telling them how to vote online at the [USATT home page](#). Here is Larry's [Election Page](#), where he goes over the main issues he would like to focus on - Regional Leagues, State Associations, Recruiting & Training Coaches, turning U.S. Open and Nationals into Premier Events, Professionalizing the Sport & other issues.

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](#). (Below: Christmas Camp 2014.)



MDTTC 2015 Camps

There will be a slight increase to our camp rates next year, but the good news is that we will honor the 2014 camp rates if the registrations for the 2015 camps are made and paid for by Dec. 2014. Here's the [2015 Camp flyer](#) - register early!

North American Teams

They were in Washington DC this past weekend, Nov. 28-30, with 825 players, 207 teams, and 153 tables. Here are the [complete results](#). MDTTC had one champion team - the MDTTC Musketeers (L-R: Coach Larry (in back), Daniel Sofer, Daniel Gong, and Benjamin Clark, with Minie Zhang also there the first two days), the Division 11 Champions!

Potomac Open

It was held Nov. 15-16. Here are the [Results](#), and here's a video of the [Final](#) between MDTTC coaches Chen Ruichao and Chen Bowen.

Ongoing Programs

- **Beginners & Advanced Beginners Junior Classes.** This is for beginners to advanced beginners, ages 6-14, with Coaches Larry, John Hsu and others assisting, and are held Saturdays 10:30 am-12 pm and Sundays 4:30-6:00 PM, and Thursdays from 6-7 PM. **The new Sat & Sun sessions begin the weekend of Jan. 3-4; the next Thursday session begins Jan. 8.** For more info, see the [Junior Group Training Page](#).



- **Afterschool Program.** The MDTTC Afterschool program continues this Winter & Spring. The program 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 info flyer](#).

- **Group Sessions.** While this is primarily for juniors, all ages are welcome - it's about 1/3 adults. They meet on Saturdays, 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, Jeffrey Zeng Xun, Wang Qing Liang, Alex Ruichao Chen, Bowen Chen, John Hsu, and Raghu Nadmichettu. 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](#) on Sundays.

MDTTC Birthday Parties

Want to have a table tennis birthday party? [Here's info!](#) Parties include one hour of coaching and games led by an MDTTC coach, usually Coach Larry.

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: Smooth Acceleration + Grazing Contact = Great Spin

By Larry Hodges

The two most common mistakes players make in failing to create great spin are 1) a lack of smooth acceleration, and 2) grazing contact, which are the two pillars of creating spin, whether it be serving, pushing, chopping, or slow looping. (For faster looping, you sink the ball more into the sponge, but the smooth acceleration part holds for all looping.) I'm mostly writing for players using inverted sponge, but the same principles apply to most pips-out surfaces as well, as long as they have some grippiness.

When looping, players below the advanced level often try to get extra spin by "muscling" the ball, meaning they try to use nearly 100% of their muscle power as they go for maximum racket velocity. The actual result is they only use a few of their upper-body muscles (often mostly arm), and a loss of control. When they learn to slow down and use all their muscles (at perhaps 70%) and smoothly accelerate into the ball, that's when they get the acceleration needed for powerful loops with both spin and speed. That's why the most powerful loopers often make it look effortless.

When serving and pushing, beginning and intermediate players often use a short stroke and sort of jab at the ball. They are thinking that the velocity they get with this jabbing will create great spin. Actually, it just leads to a loss of control as you can't control the racket this way. Plus, for physics reasons I won't get into (partially because I'm not a physicist), you get more spin if you smoothly accelerate into the ball, with the rubber literally slinging the ball out as it accelerates through contact. (When looping with both speed and spin, where you sink the ball more into the sponge, it should feel like you're almost holding the ball on your racket as it carries it through the shot, with an even greater slingshot effect.)

But on slow spin shots (serving, pushing, chopping, slow loops), you only get this tremendous spin if you graze the ball - the second problem many players have. Too often players sink the ball too much into the sponge instead of the fine grazing motion needed. To learn to graze the ball, just toss one up and graze it with your racket, making it spin. Generally do this with a pendulum serve motion, but contact the ball on the *left* side of the ball (for a righty), with the racket going mostly up and slightly left, so that the ball goes straight up. Catch it and repeat. It's important to spin the ball so it goes straight up, both so you can catch it and repeat, and so you can develop ball control. (If you can't control the direction the ball goes when you graze it with this exercise, how can you do it when actually serving?)

I recommend beginning players get a multi-colored ball or put markings on one so they can practice grazing and see the spin they are creating. This gives feedback on whether you are really spinning the ball or not and how much.

For more advanced players, I recommend they also do the ball spinning drill I wrote about above. It's a great way to really develop those grazing skills so you can both spin the heck out of the ball and control it. Advanced players should also experiment with smooth acceleration and grazing on their spin shots, and see how much they can make the ball spin.

When you can put great spin on the ball with your serve, apply the same principles to pushing and slow looping. (Also chopping if that is in your arsenal.) Don't be afraid to throw in some slow, spinny loops, even if you normally loop pretty hard. Slow, spinny loops are extremely effective at the beginning/intermediate level, but many forget or never realize how effective they are even at the advanced level if not overused. They not only are effective on their own as the opponent struggles to adjust to the slower speed and higher spin, but the contrast makes your other loops more effective.