

## ITTF HOPE PROGRAM



Tiffany Ke won  
the Hopes Trials in  
Austin, TX, and joins  
Lisa Lin on the  
USA Hopes Team.



The two MDTTC  
juniors make up  
half the team!



Maryland Table Tennis Center • [www.mdttc.com](http://www.mdttc.com)

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### [Archive of Past MDTTC Newsletters](#)

Welcome to the 47<sup>th</sup> 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 HW Global Foundation. 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](#);  
Publisher Wen Hsu.

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#### Butterfly MDTTC April Open: April 9th

Sign up now! Here's the [MDTTC Tournament Page](#), and here's the [entry form](#) for this year's tournaments. Events include Open, U2350, U2000, U1700, U1350, Under 14, and Over 50 (all RR).

You can sign up online! Coach Larry is running the four tournaments to be held this year - April 9, June 11, Sept. 10, and Oct. 22.

### **Tuesday & Friday Night Leagues**

Please arrive prior to 7:25 pm to sign up. If you know you'll be a few minutes late, please call the club at 301.519.8580 BEFORE 7:20 pm, otherwise YOU WILL BE TURNED AWAY!

### **Junior Program: New Sessions Start Soon! SIGN UP TODAY!**

- **Beginner & Advanced Beginner Classes (Age 6 - 15)**  
Sundays 4-5:30 pm, next session starts on April 10, ten weeks  
Thursdays 6 - 7 pm, next session starts on April 14, eight weeks
- **Beginners Level 2 Class for All Ages (USATT rating 500 – 1200)**  
Tuesdays 6 - 7 pm, next session starts March 15, ten weeks
- **Afterschool Program** (September – June)  
This program combines table tennis and schoolwork, with courtesy pickups at schools. 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.

### **Adult Program: Ongoing**

- **Tuesday and/or Friday Lunch Group Training (1:00-2:00 pm)** for all levels. Improve your table tennis skills while getting great physical and mental exercises. Every player will get one-on-one playing time with Coach Jeffrey Zeng (2550+ rating).
- **Sunday Adult Training** from 6:30-8:00PM. No pre-registration is required, but if you have any questions, email Coach Larry. *Be prepared to improve!!!*

### **Capital Area Team League**

There's still room for a few more players in the [Capital Area League](#), which now has 24 teams for the coming season. (Sorry, team entries are now closed.) One team is actively looking for players in the 1000-1500 range. If interested, contact [Nina Levene](#).

### **Junior Olympics: August 1 -3**

Table tennis is back in the Junior Olympics! They will be held this year in Houston, TX, Aug. 1-3. Here is the [info page](#) and the [entry form](#). We expect a good group from Maryland to attend, so come join us! Some will be going down a few days early as they will be holding the JOOLA Teams South in the same venue immediately before the Junior Olympics, on July 30-31. Here's the [entry form](#). So you can get five straight days of table tennis!

### **Campaign 2100: Game of Scorpions**

Coach Larry Hodges' has a new science fiction novel out, [Campaign 2100: Game of Scorpions](#) – and it's got lots of table tennis! He blogged about this on March 8 – one of the main characters is a professional table tennis player who ends up running the campaign for president of Earth. (The novel covers the election for president of Earth in the year 2100, where the world has adopted the American two-party electoral system, with a third-party moderate challenge, and an incredulous alien ambassador along for the ride – and he also learns to play table tennis.) Buy a copy and Larry will sign it! As part of the promotion for the novel, Larry was featured in the "[Eating Authors](#)" blog, where he recounted his most infamous meal – eating nine (!) quarter pounders with cheese in one afternoon while winning Open Singles and three other events at the 1980 North Carolina Open. As you'll read, he hasn't eaten a hamburger since – with one exception, thanks to a challenge to MDTTC kids at the Junior Olympics.

### **Birthday Parties & Rental Space for Corporate and Private Events**

MDTTC offers birthday parties ran by our popular Coach Larry. We also regularly host community events and team-building activities for local businesses. Space rental for special corporate and private events are available. 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.

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### **Tip of the Month: Visualize Your Serves and Make Them Do Tricks**

#### **By Larry Hodges**

Before you serve you should always visualize what the ball is going to do. It amazes me how many players just serve without really doing this. Top players have practiced their serves so much that this is instinctive - they don't think about it, they just know exactly what the ball is going to do.

Visualizing a serve means seeing in your head before you serve the contact, direction, speed, spin, height, depth, bounces, and curve of the ball.

One fun way of practicing this is to make your serves do tricks. For example, try serving backspin where you graze the ball so finely that all your energy goes into backspin - and so the serve bounces backward into the net. But it's not enough for the ball to come backwards - you should be able to visualize its actual path in advance. Try serving where you visualize how deep the ball will go and how many bounces before it comes backwards, and the direction it'll come back (since most backspin serves have some sidespin as well). This visualizing includes what the ball does on your side of the net - how fast the ball will travel, where the first bounce on your side will be, and how low to the net it'll be. (When first practicing heavy backspin serves or trying to make the ball bounce backwards, don't worry about serving too low. But as you master the serve, you want the ball to practically skim the net.)

Serving backspin so that the ball bounces back into the net isn't really a serve you need in a match. In fact, it's better to drive such a backspin serve out more so that the second bounce is near the end-line, making it difficult for the receiver to attack, push short, or rush you with a quick, deep push. But the key is being able to control the serve - and you can't control it unless you know what you want the ball to do. Try to visualize the entire path of the ball in advance, including both bounces on the far side, and the way the ball curves between bounces if there's sidespin.

Do the same with a regular sidespin serve, where you serve to one side of the table, but curve it back to the other side - but visualize the curving path of the ball in advance. Perhaps set up a target and try to curve the ball into the target.

Then do the same thing with your deep serves, perhaps putting up targets on the far end-line, and try to hit them - again, visualizing the entire path of the ball in advance, right up until it smacks the target. Then do the same with all your other serves, with or without targets.

At first, this visualizing will feel like a hassle that slows you down. But soon it'll become second nature, and you won't even think about it - but you'll have master control over your serves.

### **Bonus Tip of the Month: Remember the Feel of the Great Shots**

#### **By Larry Hodges**

This one is short and sweet. From now on, whenever you hit a perfect shot, *REMEMBER* the feel of that shot - the stroke and the contact. Then repeat. That is all.