



Maryland  
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Center

# MDTTC News



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BUTTERFLY

Open Singles Champion Jishan Liang, Runner-up Ruichao Chen, and Semifinalists Chen bo Wen and Azeez Jamui



Under 2400 Champion Tiffany Ke and Runner-up Courage Nanevie



Under 2200 Runner-up Claudia Ikeizumi

On Right: Under 2000 Champion Jessica Lin. On Left: Mossa Barandao of Pongmobile.

Under 1500 Runner-up Nicole Deng and Champion Mu Du



Under 1800 Runner-up Justin Hensley and Champion Stanley Hsu

Under 1200 Champion Jordan Dovel and Runner-up Matthew Dovel

Under 15 Runner-up Spencer Chen and Champion Kelly Liang



## Butterfly MDTTC February Open Finalists!

Over 50 Runner-up Eugene Zhang and Champion James Deng



Under 12 Champion Ainish Dassarma and Runner-up Stanley Hsu



Welcome to the 58<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](#) 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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### USA HOPES CAMP AND TOURNAMENT

**Congrats to Nicole Deng for making the 2017 U.S. Hopes Team!** USATT Hopes Camp and Tournament were conducted on March 4 & 5. Head coach for the Camp was MDTTC Coach Wang Qing Liang, assisted by a number of MDTTC coaches. Coach Larry Hodges ran the Sunday Team Trial and Tournament. [Click here for details and complete results.](#)

### CAPITAL AREA TEAM LEAGUE - 2016 Fall Results and Upcoming 2017 Spring Season Signup Now

On Feb. 25 they finished the latest season in the [Capital Area Table Tennis League](#), for players in the Washington DC region (which includes MD and Northern VA). There were four divisions; click on the division to see the results. Congrats to the four division winners: MDTTC Lions, NVTTC One, PPG Potomac, and Rebel Alliance! [Sign-ups for the upcoming season](#) has begun; deadline is March 20.

**MDTTC Junior Programs** For more info, see the [Junior Group Training Page](#).

- **Beginning-Intermediate Junior Group Classes (age 6 -14): The next Sunday Session starts on March 26, 4 -5:30 PM for ten weeks, and the next Thursday Classes start on April 20, 6-7 PM for nine weeks.** Coaches: Larry Hodges, John Hsu and others assisting. For more info, see the [Junior Group Training Page](#). (If you join in mid-season, your fee will be pro-rated.)
- **Junior Group Level 2 Classes (age 8 - 14): The next session starts on Tuesday, March 28** from 6-7 PM with Coach John Hsu. Players must know the basics in table tennis and/or have taken table tennis classes previously. [Click here for more info.](#)
- **Advanced Junior Group Training.** Junior Training with Coach Jack Huang or Coach Cheng, roughly 1700-2400. The training is on Saturdays from 4:30-6:30. For more info, contact jack or Cheng directly.

### Upcoming Tournaments

Our next tournament is the \$2700 3-star [April 8-9 Open](#), with ten events - Open, U2400, U2200, U2000, U1800, U1500, U1200, Over 50, Under 15, and Under 12. If you can't wait that long and

are dying for a tournament, there's the [Winter Challenge Championships](#) on March 11 at Smash TT in Herndon, VA.

### Spring Break Camp

The camp will be held April 10-14. It's for all ages and levels, though it'll be dominated by kids. [Here's info on the camp](#) and our upcoming summer camps.

### MDTTC Leagues:

- [Tuesday and Friday Night Leagues](#). All ages and levels. 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
- [Wednesday Night Recreational League](#). Play is from 7:30-9:00PM. **We are looking for a volunteer to help set up ONLINE MEETUP signup option. Please contact Wen**
- [Sunday Elite League](#) Primarily for players over 2000; Sign up at MDTTC prior to 12:30PM on Sundays.
- [Saturday Junior League](#). For ages 6-18, from 6:30-8:30 PM on March 11 & 25, April 22, May 6, 13 & 20, June 3 & 24. Participants must be pre-approved by Head Coach Wang. Coach Wang runs this league with other MDTTC coaches: warm-up, match play, game analysis, and physical training.

### MID-ATLANTIC COLLEGE CHAMPIONSHIPS

MDTTC player Nathan Hsu made it to the semifinals of Men's Singles, winning his first five matches before losing to eventual champion and top seed, Timothy Wang (3-time USA Men's Singles Champion). The event was held Feb. 25-26 at the Triangle TTC in North Carolina.

### MDTTC \$2700 FEBRUARY OPEN - the Days the Juniors Howled!

By Larry Hodges

(See photo gallery at top, or click on names in results below for pictures.)

Kids dominated at the tournament this weekend at the Maryland Table Tennis Center in Gaithersburg, MD, winning five of the six rating events (the five highest ones), not to mention Under 15 and Under 12. (Here are [complete results from Omnipong](#).) Only in the Open, Over 50, and Under 1200 were the kids fought off. Taking part were 83 players from nine states (MD, VA, PA, WV, NC, NY, OH, MA, and MO, plus DC), as well as players from Nigeria (Azeez Jamiu), Brazil (Lidney Castro) and Ghana (Courage Nanevie), plus of course a number of Chinese stars now playing and coaching in the U.S. - Jishan Liang, Ruichao "Alex" Chen, Chen Bo Wen, and Wang Qing Liang

I ran the tournament, but with great help from Mossa Barandao of [Pongmobile](#) (who acted as assistant director) and Wen Hsu, as well as Referee Paul Kovac and Umpire Steven Yeh. Thanks also goes to sponsors [Butterfly](#) and the [HW Global Foundation](#).

Jishan Liang, now coaching at the [Triangle TTC](#) in North Carolina, won **Open Singles** over Ruichao "Alex" Chen in an all-lefty final, 7,8,7,8. If you wanted to see ferocious counterlooping, this was the match to see. In the semifinals, Jishan defeated Nigerian Azeez Jamiu, 8,4,9,-7,-9,9. The match was slightly marred by a controversy at 7-8 in the sixth, with Jishan leading. He apparently ripped a winner, but Azeez and some witnesses claimed it went *through* the net. Sure enough, the net had become frayed and there was a part where the string had broken out of the netting, and so could be pulled apart. But it's a quick judgement call for the umpire, and he called it good (and you can't change a judgment call), and so the point stood. (We immediately changed nets - *that* will never happen again I promise!) Azeez took it pretty well after the match, even staying to watch the final.

In the other semifinal, Alex defeated fellow MDTTC coach Chen Bo Wen, 6,5,10,4, in an all-out two-way power display. Few players can rip the ball as hard as these two players, and yet the more savvy viewers may have studied their serve and often controlled receive, which is what sets up those rips.

The most interesting quarterfinal match was Chen Bo Wen's monumental comeback against Lidney Castro from Brazil. Lidney won the first two games at 6 and 12, but an all-out third-balling Chen won the next two at 7 and 3. In the fifth, down 0-4, Chen came back to 9-all, only to fall behind 9-10 match point. His next serve was probably meant to be "half-long," with the second bounce at the end-line, but it went a few inches too long, and Lidney absolutely ripped it - just off! And so Chen saved that match point, and won the next two points. Another great quarterfinal match was Jishan's battle with another MDTTC coach, chopper/looper Wang Qing Liang. Jishan won 3-0, 8,7,9, but all three games were battles.

Now we get to the kid-killing part of the tournament - not killing kids, but kids killing everything and winning the top five rating events, three of them by girls. In **Under 2400**, it was 12-year-old Tiffany Ke (rated 2238) over Courage Nanevie of Guyana, 11,5,9. In the semifinals, she had barely gotten past 14-year-old Spencer Chen (under-rated at 2057), -11,9,-9,8,8. In the other semifinal, Courage also came back, from down 0-2, to win at -5,-7,8,6,4 against 15-year-old Klaus Wood (rated 2363).

In **Under 2200**, it was 13-year-old Kelly Liang over Claudia Ikeizumi, 4,5,-9,6. In **Under 2000**, it was 12-year-old Jessica Lin over Nicholas Wetzler, 9,5,7. In **Under 1800**, it was 8-year-old Stanley Hsu over Justin Hensley, 7,6,8 - is it even legal to win an event that high at that age? Stanley had come in way under-rated at 1406. In the preliminaries, he'd actually lost a deuce-in-the-fourth battle with Justin (rated 1696), but apparently he (or his coach) had figured something out for the final. Justin had a battle in the semifinals, defeating 12-year-old Daniel Sofer at 12,-7,9,-9,8, in a battle between two players with great lobbing skills. Another 8-year-old took **Under 1500**, with Mu Du over 10-year-old Nicole Deng, 9,-7,-5,7,9. But the junior howling came to an end in **Under 1200**, which was a family affair as Jordan Dovel (21, coming in with a rating of 932) upset brother Matthew (17, 1121) in another monumental struggle, 9,12,-9,-10,8.

The juniors came back sweep both junior events. In **Under 15**, it was 13-year-old Kelly Liang (adding to her Under 2200 title) over 14-year-old Spencer Chen, where she'd won one game from down 7-9, and down 5-7 in the fifth, won five in a row. Spencer had won against his younger brother, 12-year-old Ronald, while in the other semifinals Kelly had to come back to win against William Huang, -9,-8,6,6,6. In **Under 12**, it was 10-year-old Ainish Dassarma over 8-year-old Stanley Hsu, 3,10,7. Both had titanic semifinal matches, with Ainish winning out against 9-year-old chopper Andy Wu, 9,10,-8,-10,6, and Stanley just edging out 9-year-old Ryan Lee, 2,-5,7,-6,9. In the quarters, Andy had to battle back to win against 10-year-old Nicole Deng, -9,-8,8,11,7. In **Over 50**, however, the juniors were completely shut out, with James Deng winning out over Eugene Zhang, 11,2,5.

### MDTTC Butterfly February Open Results

Here are [complete results from Omnipong](#). Here are the [rating results](#) from USATT.

(Click on names below to see pictures, or see gallery at top.)

**Open Singles - Final:** [Jishan Liang d. Ruichao "Alex" Chen, 7,8,7,8](#); **SF:** [Liang d. Azeez Jamiu, 8,4,9,-7,-9,9](#); [R. Chen d. Chen Bo Wen, 6,5,10,4](#); **QF:** R. Chen d. Nathan Hsu, 6,8,11; Chen Bo Wen d. Lidney Castro, -6,-12,7,3,10; Jamiu d. Roy Ke, 6,8,-7,9; Liang d. Wang Qing Liang, 8,7,9.

**Under 2400 - Final:** [Tiffany Ke d. Courage Nanevie](#), 11,5,9; **SF:** Ke d. Spencer Chen, -11,9,-9,8,8; Nanevie d. Klaus Wood, -5,-7,8,6,4; **QF:** Wood d. William Huang, 3,9,-9,3; Nanevie d. Naveen Vaddadi, -8,7,3,4; Chen d. Kelly Liang, 2,-9,-6,7,3; Ke d. John Wetzler, 5,-9,7,-12,8.

**Under 2200 - Final:** Kelly Liang d. [Claudia Ikeizumi](#), 4,5,-9,6; **SF:** Liang d. Courage Nanevie, 6,4,-3,4; Ikeizumi d. Costel Constantin, 7,8,5.

**Under 2000 - Final:** [Jessica Lin](#), d. Nicholas Wetzler, 9,5,7; **SF:** Lin d. William Xu, 11,9,-9,7; Wetzler d. Frederick Nicolas, -7,9,8,6.

**Under 1800 - Final:** [Stanley Hsu d. Justin Hensley](#), 7,6,8; **SF:** Hsu d. Nicole Deng, 8,8,7; Hensley d. Daniel Sofer, 12,-7,9,-9,8.

**Under 1500 - Final:** [Mu Du d. Nicole Deng](#), 9,-7,-5,7,9; **SF:** Du d. Andy Wu, 9,-4,6,5; Deng d. Debabrata Ghosh, 5,-9,-7,9,7.

**Under 1200 - Final:** [Jordan Dovel d. Matthew Dovel](#), 9,12,-9,-10,8; **SF:** J. Dovel d. Stephanie Zhang, -9,11-11,1,8; M. Dovel d. Eugene Zhang, -5,6,-7,8,9.

**Over 50:** [1<sup>st</sup> James Deng, 3-0](#); [2<sup>nd</sup> Eugene Zhang, 2-1](#); 3<sup>rd</sup> Alex Nguyen, 1-2; 4<sup>th</sup> James Wilson, 0-3.

**Under 15 - Final:** [Kelly Liang d. Spencer Chen](#), -8,9,-6,8,8; **SF:** Liang d. William Huang, -9,-8,6,6,6; Chen d. Ronald Chen, 6,6,4.

**Under 12 - Final:** [Ainish Dassarma d. Stanley Hsu](#), 3,10,7; **SF:** Dassarma d. Andy Wu, 9,10,-8,-10,6; Hsu d. Ryan Lee, 2,-5,7,-6,9.

## MDTTC Adult Programs

- [Tuesday and/or Friday Lunch Break 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 7:00-8:30PM. No pre-registration is required, but if you have any questions, [email](#) Coach Larry. Complete beginners should take 2-3 private coaching sessions first so they can hit basic forehands, backhands, and push. *Be prepared to improve!!!*

**MDTTC PRIVATE COACHING** by Coaches Jack Huang, Cheng Yinghua, Larry Hodges, Alex Ruichao Chen, Jeffrey Zeng, Wang Qingliang, John Hsu, Bowen Chen, and other high level training partners. See [Private Coaching page](#).

## 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.

## Tip of the Month: Hitting Accurate Shots

By Larry Hodges

Players are often amazed at how accurate a top player can place his shots. This is an important skill to develop since the large majority of the time there are only three places you want to place your shots - wide forehand, wide backhand, and the opponent's middle (midway between forehand and backhand - see [Attacking the Middle](#), where this is explained). When your shot goes elsewhere (i.e. toward the middle of the forehand or backhand sides) you give your opponent a much easier shot, where he doesn't even have to move much. And yet most players let their shots drift out of these three spots, and lose many matches as a result. So how can you learn to hit these shots accurately?

Obviously you can go out to the table and just practice relentlessly, aiming for these three shots. But there's a shortcut that'll help before you do all this relentless practice. Go to the backhand side of your table, stick your racket out as if you were doing a backhand block, and aim it

crosscourt, wide to the opponent's backhand (if you are both righties). Make sure your racket is aimed right at the wide corner, or even slightly outside the corner. Keep holding the racket out there until you have literally memorized the feel of holding the racket in this position, so that in a game situation, you'll go into this position and hit the shot right to that spot.

Now repeat, except now aim it down the line. Again, memorize the feel of holding the racket in that position. Then repeat one more time, this time aiming at where the opponent's middle would be. (Alas, you actually have to do this twice, for a righty and lefty opponent, since the righty's middle will be a bit to the right of the midline, the lefty to the left.)

Once you've memorized the feel of the racket aiming where you want it to go, imagine the ball going to your left, and step there with your left foot, and imagine keeping the racket angle so that it still aims where you want it to go. Now imagine a ball going to your right, and step there with your right foot, and again imagine keeping the racket angle so that it still aims where you want it to go. Moving is no excuse for losing ball control - the ball will still go wherever you aim your racket.

Now repeat all of the above with your forehand!

Here are some complications to be aware of.

- When blocking, you can keep the racket aimed exactly where you want it to go the entire shot, so aiming should be easy. (Advanced players learn to change the direction of the racket at the last second to throw opponent's off, and you should as well, but in the end you are still aiming the ball where you want it to go, and if you memorize the feel of the racket aiming in each direction, you can do this very quickly.) With longer strokes, the racket may not aim where you want it to go during the backswing, but it should do so well before contact. Learn to time this so that the racket aims where you want the ball to go far enough before contact that you can get the feel of aiming the racket to the three spots. (Four if you count the middle twice, one for righties and one for lefties.)
- A ball with sidespin will bounce at least slightly sideways off your racket, and a ball coming at you from an angle will also bounce off your racket slightly sideways. However, if you stroke the ball sharply enough, this sideways movement is minimized to the point where you barely have to adjust for it.
- Unlike playing to the wide forehand and backhand, the opponent's middle is a moving target. His middle is based on where he is standing. As the opponent moves in a rally, his middle will move. Also, some players have both a neutral stance (so middle is about midway between forehand and backhand) and a forehand- or backhand-favoring stance (and so the middle moves more to "weaker" side). The more you play an opponent's middle the more it becomes natural to find this moving target.
- You won't always be hitting from the same spot. If you hit a backhand from the wide backhand, and another from the middle, you have to adjust where you aim the racket so that it still goes to the three spots. This quickly become second nature.

Once you get into the habit of aiming the racket by learning the feel of it, you'll be able to accurately hit shots to the corners and middle at will, against any incoming shot, and from all parts of the table. This will put tremendous pressure on opponents since you won't be giving them many easy shots - and this relentless ball placement will pay off in many wins!