



**Bowen Chen's Reverse Penhold Backhand Loop.  
He won the Robopong Open and is featured in two USATT news items.**

### Archive of Past MDTTC Newsletters

Welcome to the 65<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 OCTOBER 14-15 OPEN**

[Our next tournament is October 14-15](#) – the \$2700 3-star October Open! Events include Open, U2400, U2200, U2000, U1800, U1500, U1200, Over 50, Under 15, and Under 12. All events start with round robin, with the top two players advancing to single elimination. Hope to see you there!

#### **MDTTC ADULT PROGRAMS**

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

#### **BOWEN CHEN FEATURED ON USATT NEWS PAGE**

- [Bowen Chen: Running Toward His Goals](#) by Larry Hodges
- [Bowen Chen Takes Crown at Robopong September BTTC Open 2017](#)

#### **2018 WORLD VETERANS CHAMPIONSHIPS**

[Here's the home page.](#) They will be held June 18-24, 2018, in Las Vegas. A lot of Maryland players will be going and competing, including coaches Cheng Yinghua and Larry Hodges. Cheng will be playing Over 60 Men's Doubles with five-time USA Men's Champion Dan Seemiller, who's a lefty doubles specialist (12-time U.S. Men's Doubles Champion), and many believe they have a great chance to win the event – and they will likely be a huge fan favorite. So why not come join us there? About 5000 players from all over the world are expected, including many of the past world champions and other stars.

Some locals who are entered so far (with apologies to any missed) include Yinghua Cheng, Changping Duan, Steve Hochman, Larry Hodges, Barbara Kaminsky, Yvonne Kronlage, Charlene Liu, Dave & Donna Sakai, Gary Schlager, Jozef Simkovic, Bob Slapnik, Jeff & Yvonne Smart, Julian Waters, Jim Wilson, and Stephen Yeh.

#### **CALL FOR UMPIRES**

Interested in becoming a USATT umpire? MDTTC is in need of them for our tournaments. Currently our only certified umpires are Paul Kovac (International Umpire and Certified Referee), Stephen Yeh, and Larry Hodges. If you are interested, here's the [USATT info page](#) – see [USATT Referee Qualifications](#) and [Interested in becoming an umpire?](#)

#### **CAPITAL AREA LEAGUE**

The [Capital Area Team League](#)'s Fall 2017 Season has started on October 1<sup>st</sup>, with table tennis enthusiasts in the Maryland, Virginia, and DC area, participating in four divisions. More than 40 teams with over 200 players have participated in this team league during the last 6 seasons!

#### **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

- [Sunday Elite League](#). This is primarily for players over 2000, and is on Sundays at 12:30PM.
- [Saturday Junior League](#). For ages 6-18, from 5:30-7:30PM, about twice a month. Run by Coach Wang Qingliang, focusing on match play, game analysis (tactics & strategies), and mental training. Players must be pre-approved by Coach Wang.

### MDTTC JUNIOR PROGRAMS

Our Sunday Novices/Beginners/ Advanced Beginners Class & Tuesday Level 2 Class are FULL for the Fall Sessions. To reserve a spot for your child for the Winter Sessions, please register early.

**MDTTC PRIVATE COACHING** by Coaches Cheng Yinghua, Jack Huang, Larry Hodges, Jeffrey Zeng, Wang Qingliang, Bowen Chen, Martin Jezo, John Hsu, and Alex Ruichao Chen (returning on Oct 27). 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: Make Adjusting a Habit by Playing Different Players**

By Larry Hodges

Most players understand that you need to play many different styles to learn how to play against them. Otherwise, when you face them in a match, you will struggle with them. And so smart players make sure to play against a variety of styles, and learn how to play each of the main ones.

However, many players mistake playing different styles with playing different players. Let's suppose you spend the large bulk of your playing time at your club playing against ten other players, most of them probably around your level. You might be playing against a decent range of playing styles, though probably not all. However, since you are playing mostly against the same players, week after week, month after month, even year after year, while you become very familiar and good against those players, there's one huge thing you are *not* doing – and that's making it a habit to adjust to different players.

It's not enough to just play against different styles, though that's a big part of it. If you play mostly the same players all the time, then aren't regularly adjusting to new players. And so when you do have to adjust to a new player, it's much more difficult to do then if you were playing different players regularly, in which you are constantly adjusting your game to players you rarely or never play, and so it becomes a habit.

There are really two types of adjusting. One is adjusting your strokes against different players. This is somewhat obvious. If you play in a tournament and your opponent uses long pips in a way you are not used to, or has a loop that's different from the players you are used to playing against, or hits his shots flatter, or has a weird push, or has a different serve, or something else – *everyone* has something unique in their game – you have to adjust your strokes to these

differences. If you are not used to playing different players regularly, you will likely struggle making the adjustment since adjusting your strokes to new players is not something you are used to doing. And so you struggle. Perhaps you eventually make the adjustment, but it's also likely that you lose the match, and come off the table still uncomfortable with whatever it was the opponent did differently.

This type of adjustment isn't subtle, and most players understand that they need to adjust their strokes against different opponents, even if they often go right back to playing the same group of players all the time. They at least understand the problem, and perhaps will make some attempt to fix it by looking to play different players. If they do this enough, they might develop the habit of adjusting their strokes to new opponents.

But as noted above, there is a second type of adjusting – tactical. This is more subtle. If you struggle to adjust your strokes to an opponent, it's obvious. But if you aren't used to adjusting your tactics to new opponents – which you develop by playing new opponents regularly – then you likely will not even realize it afterwards. You may have adjusted your strokes perfectly and felt comfortable out there, but still lost because, unknowingly, you aren't used to adjusting your tactics to different opponents, and so play them as if they were one of the players you are used to playing.

I'm going to use my own game as an example here. During my prime years I had a very steady game – in fact, from my backhand corner to my wide forehand I had a brick wall defense that few could get through. Many opponents would have great rallies with me, but were unable to get through that steadiness. (I was primarily a forehand attacker, but once an opponent attacked I'd fall back on mostly blocking and countering.) What only a few smart opponents figured out was that while I was steady, I struggled with one type of attack – into my wide backhand, outside the corner. Those who played me regularly, and those that were used to adjusting to new opponents, figured out that when attacking against me, the goal was to get a ball that landed a little short, and then attack that ball just outside the corner on my backhand side. But since most tournament opponents did not play me regularly and were not good at adjusting tactically, most didn't figure this out, and so when they got that slightly short ball, they'd continue to attack the corners and my middle (elbow), and I'd be a brick wall – but only because they failed to adjust by going after that huge hole off to the side of that brick wall.

While I'm on the topic of using my game as an example, I'm still amazed at how many opponents never figured out how strong I was forehand looping against forehand pendulum serves, while I struggled with the opposite type of sidespin (backhand, tomahawk, and reverse pendulum serves) – and so they'd continue to give me a steady diet of forehand pendulum serves to the point where I'd sometimes hold back just to encourage them to keep giving me those serves. (Thank you!) In both cases given here, my opponents usually were not in the habit of adjusting tactically to new players, and so they didn't adjust tactically.

The root of the problem of not adjusting your strokes and tactics to new players is not regularly playing new players, which is where you develop the habit of making this adjustment. However, the latter – developing the habit of adjusting your tactics to new players – is a bit more subtle and insidious, as while the former pretty much you slaps you in the face if you don't adjust, the latter does not.

The cure to all of this, of course, is to seek out new players, at your club, at different clubs, in leagues, and in tournaments. If this means playing against weaker players just so you can play someone different, then do so – everyone brings something different to the table that you can practice against.