



Players and coaches at the Hopes Camp and Trials, April 27-29.



In final weeks to help raise money for our local junior table tennis players and their coaches to participate at the 2018 U.S. National Championships in Las Vegas. Please donate to non-profit [HW Global Foundation](http://www.hwglobalfoundation.com). They need your support! See segment below.



Welcome to the 72nd 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](http://www.butterfly.com) and [HW Global Foundation](http://www.hwglobalfoundation.com). 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](http://www.larryhodges.com); Publisher Wen Hsu.

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MDTTC Summer Camps

The [MDTTC Summer Camps](#) start June 18 and continue all summer, Mon-Fri, through Aug. 31. (The only exception is July 2-6, during the USA Nationals.) These camps are primarily for kids of all levels, but adults are welcome as well.

Maryland State Championships, June 2-3 at MDTTC

[Here's the info page](#). You can enter online via [Omnipong](#) or with the [printed entry form](#). There are 21 events, with age events from Under 10 to Over 70, rating events from Under 1000 to Under 2400, Open Doubles and three rating doubles events, plus Men's and Women's Singles. All players are eligible for rating events. In other events, players must have lived in Maryland for at least 3 months prior to the tournament. Military personnel assigned to Maryland and full-time Maryland students are immediately eligible.

MDTTC Featured by Butterfly

[Here's the article](#) by Coach Larry. Here's the first paragraph: "The Maryland Table Tennis Center, founded in 1992, has been a successful full-time table tennis training center in the United States for almost 30 years. The club dominated play in the U.S. in the 1990s and much of the 2000s, winning over half of the gold medals at the Junior Nationals and Junior Olympics in many of those years, and at times having the top two men and top two women in the country, and over half of the top 20 players in the country. In 2011 the Men's Singles Final at the Nationals was an all-MDTTC battle, with Peter Li winning over Han Xiao. MDTTC has seen a resurgence of a strong group of young players with its renewed focus on teamwork; coaches work together as a team and players train together as a team."

HW Global Foundation Talent Development Program - They need your support!

Here is the [GoFundMe page](#), and the [Promotional Video](#) (2:49, care of [PongMobile](#)) - you don't want to miss this! They are trying to raise funding to kids and their coaches to attend a preparation camp & compete at the U.S. Nationals. These kids are local juniors from DC/MD/VA who train in HW Global Foundation's Youth Development Program at MDTTC. They are so close in meeting their goal - currently at \$13,825 of the \$15,500 goal.

Butterfly MDTTC April Open

[Here's the article, results, pictures, and rating results](#) of the April 14-15 tournament.

USATT Hopes Camp and Tournament at MDTTC

MDTTC ran one of the six USATT regional Hopes camps and tournaments, on April 27-29. Local juniors Jackson Beaver won Silver while Nicole Deng received Bronze Medals. Congrats! This 3-day event was primarily for kids born in 2006 or 2007, but others under age 16 were also in the camp and the rating events in the tournament. The camp was run by USATT National Team Coaches Pieke Franssen (head coach) and Wang Qingliang, assisted by coaches Larry Hodges, Michael Lauro, Jeffrey Zeng Xun, Lidney Castro, Rajul Urvashi, and John Hsu. Players from ten states took part - MD, VA, PA, OH, NY, NJ, MA, NC, MN, CA. Here is Coach Larry's [write-up and results](#).

Larry Hodges Named USATT's 2018 Lifetime Achievement Award Winner

[Here's the article](#), including Larry's bulleted bio. The ceremony will take place at the Hall of Fame Banquet at the USA Nationals in Las Vegas in July.

Butterfly MDTTC Writer

Do you want to be a writer? Want to get published? Butterfly Table Tennis would like to find someone from MDTTC who can do regular articles for their weekly In the Loop newsletter and their [news page](#). Articles could be on topics such as coaching, equipment, tournaments, leagues, and profiles of coaches and players. Writer will likely get paid in free equipment! If interested, contact [Larry Hodges](#) (who can also help you come up with article ideas).

USA Nationals

[Here's the home page](#) where you can enter and find other info. We're hoping to have a big contingent from MDTTC!!! [Here's Coach Larry's blog about it.](#)

USA Team Selection Procedures

Here are the various [USATT Selection Procedures](#) for the various USA Teams, including Men's, Women's, and Junior, Cadet, and Mini-Cadet for boys and girls.

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
- [Saturday Elite League](#). This is primarily for players over 2000, and is on Saturdays at 1 PM, but sign up by 12:45 PM.
- [Saturday Junior League](#). For ages 6-18, from 5:30-7:30PM, 1-3 times a month. Run by Coach Wang Qingliang with assistance from Larry Hodges, John Hsu, and others, it includes warm-up, match play, game analysis, and physical training (time permitting). Players must be pre-approved by Coach Wang. Upcoming sessions are May 5, 12, 19.

MDTTC Junior Programs

- **Sunday Beginning/Intermediate Junior Class**. Players may join in mid-season with a pro-rated fee. Sundays 4:00-5:30, ending June 10. This is for beginners to advanced beginners, ages 6-14, with Coach Larry, John Hsu, and others assisting, depending on number of players. Players may join in mid-season with a pro-rated fee. For more info, see the [Junior Group Training Page](#).
- **Thursday Beginning/Intermediate Junior Class**. The new seasons started on April 12, 2018 (Thursdays 6:30-7:30, nine weeks, ending June 7). This is for beginners to advanced beginners, ages 7-13, with Coaches Larry Hodges and John Hsu. For more info, see the [Junior Group Training Page](#).
- **Tuesday Beginning Level 2 Class for ages 8-15**, Tuesdays, 6-7PM. Current session is full. This is intended for kids 8-15 who enjoy playing table tennis and want to improve their game. Players must know the basics in table tennis and/or have taken table tennis lessons previously. The class is kept small for individualized instruction. Sessions are Tuesdays from 6-7PM with Coach John Hsu. For more info, see the [Junior Group Training Page](#).

MDTTC Adult Program

[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).

MDTTC Private Coaching by Coaches Cheng Yinghua, Jack Huang, Larry Hodges, Jeffrey Zeng, Wang Qingliang, Bowen Chen, Martin Jezo, and John Hsu. See [Private Coaching page](#).

Birthday Parties & Rental Space for Corporate and Private Event

MDTTC offers birthday parties ran by our popular Coach Larry. We also regularly host community events and team-building activities for local businesses.

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: How to Return Nets and Edges

By Larry Hodges

There are two main problems with returning nets and edges. First, they catch you off guard because they come out unexpectedly in unpredictable ways. And second, there's no way to practice against them systematically.

Except . . . neither of these statements are correct. Why is that?

It is true that you never know when the opponent is going to get a net or edge, so it's unexpected, and it's true that they will come out in unpredictable ways, depending on how they hit the net or edge. But they should *not* catch you off guard - you should always be ready for anything. This means being in a ready position ready to react to *anything*, and that includes "unexpected" nets and edges that come out in "unpredictable" ways. Yes, they usually lower your chance of making a good return and winning the point, but that's no different than if the opponent faked a smash and instead did a short drop shot. You just have to react and do the best you can.

It's also true that you can't systematically practice directly against nets and edges. Note the word "directly" that I stuck in there, because you *can* indirectly practice against nets and edges. How? By always training to be as light on your feet as possible, in a good ready position, ready to react and move in any direction needed. This allows you to quickly react to "unexpected" and "unpredictable" shots, including nets and edges.

Now let's suppose you've trained to always be ready to react to anything, and so you managed to get to that net or edge and are about to make a return. What do you do with it? In most cases, you should focus on controlling the ball back deep on the table, ideally with topspin or backspin. You should also place the ball. For example, against a strong forehand player who likes to play forehands from the backhand side, you might fake toward the backhand side, and then just roll, push, or chop the ball to the wide forehand, catching him going the wrong way. Or if he's a slower player with a strong forehand, perhaps fake to the forehand, then return deep to the backhand. The key is depth (which makes it harder for the opponent to rip the ball, or to attack at wide angles, plus giving you more time to react to the his shot), and doing something to mess him up, whether by putting spin on the ball, placing the shot, or faking one way and going another.

And there's one other key thing to returning nets and edges: *Don't Panic!!!* Often players get flustered by such shots. Stay cool and react as best you can, and you'll be surprised how many points you can win off these shots. Don't worry about the unreturnable nets and edges - you have no control over them - and instead focus on the ones you *do* have control over, and try to win those points.

Bonus Tip of the Month: Are You a 10-8 or an 8-10 Player?

By Larry Hodges

Some players play best when their back is to the wall - when they are down 8-10, they come alive and play like champions. Others are best when they are ahead and have more confidence in going for their shots or playing their game - and play best when they are up 10-8. Or perhaps it's earlier in the game when a player might play his best when he's up or down, such as at 3-7 or 7-3.

If you are one of these players, then you should take advantage of it. Suppose you play best from behind. Then when the score is 0-0, imagine that the score is 8-10 - and do this every point! It's especially effective near the end when nerves become a bigger factor - so if you are an 8-10 player and find yourself leading 10-8, image it's 8-10, and vice versa.

This isn't a perfect system. Often a player comes alive near the end of a game because he's gotten used to the opponent, so you might have to work your way into the match, and use this mental technique only after you have done so. But once you are into the match, start imagining the score where you play your best, and you'll likely play your best. If you do this enough, soon you won't have to do this - from habit, you'll mentally begin to play your best at any score.