

MDTTC News

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Welcome to the third 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/Llewellyn realtor](#). Make sure to read my daily table tennis blog - I often write about MDTTC happenings there.

-Editor and Coach Larry Hodges, just back from the U.S. Open

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2012 U.S. Open &

2012 USA Junior and Cadet Open- ITTF Junior Circuit

Lots of MDTTC players excelled at the U.S. Open & the ITTF Junior Circuit Open, June 30-July 4 in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Below is a short listing, and here is [Larry Hodges' blog](#) about it.

U.S. Open:

- **Wang Qing Liang**, 17 - Men's Singles Semifinalist (defeating Timothy Wang and Pierre-Luc Hinse, members of the USA and Canadian Olympic Teams); and Under 21 Semifinalist and Under 18 Finalist;
- **Charlene Liu** - Over 50 Women and Over 60 Women's Champion, and finalist in Over 40 Women;
- **Larry Hodges** - Hardbat Doubles Champion for the 13th time (with Ty Hoff of Florida);
- **Derek Nie**, 11 - 11 & Under Boys' Singles Champion
- **Chen Bo Wen**, 14 - Cadet Boys' Singles Finalist;
- **Amy Lu**, 11 - Cadet Girls' Finalist;
- **Lilly Lin**, 14 - Women's Under 2100 Champion.

ITTF Junior Circuit:

- **Crystal Wang**, 10 - Cadet Girls' Doubles Champion (with Isabel Chu) and Cadet Girls' Singles Quarterfinalist;
- **Tong Tong Gong**, 14 - Cadet Boys' Doubles Finalist (with Kanak Jha) and Cadet Boys' Singles Quarterfinalist;
- **Nathan Hsu**, 16 - Junior Boys' Team Quarterfinalist (with Ethan Jin)

Ongoing Programs

- **Summer Camps.** MDTTC is running [training camps](#) all summer, eleven consecutive weeks, Mon-Fri every week from June 18 to Aug. 24. Coaches are Cheng Yinghua, Jack Huang, and Larry Hodges, with various practice partners as well. Camps are mostly filled with junior players, but all ages and levels are welcome. Sessions are from 10AM-1PM, 3-6PM each day. Chinese food is delivered for lunch each day for roughly \$6 - you order it in the morning. See the [Training Camps page](#).

- **Beginning Junior Class.** This is for beginning juniors ages 6-13, with Coach Larry Hodges, and are held Saturdays 10:30AM-Noon and Sundays 4:30-6:00 PM. [Click here for details.](#)
- **Group Sessions.** While this is primarily for juniors, all ages are welcome - it's about 1/3 adults. They meet on Sat & Sun, 4:30-6:30. The first 30 minutes is practice/warm-up, then 90 minutes of matches. See the [Junior Group Training page.](#)
- **Private Coaching,** by Coaches Cheng Yinghua, Jack Huang, Jeffrey Zeng Xun, or Larry Hodges. (Jeffrey is currently in China, so no new lessons from him for now.) Coaching is also available from Wang Qing Liang, Chen Bo Wen, and Raghu Nadmichettu. See [Private Coaching page.](#)
- **Leagues.** MDTTC runs four different leagues. Take your pick! They are the [Tuesday and Friday Leagues](#) (for all ages and levels); the [Corporate League](#); and the [Elite League](#).

ITTF Coaching Seminar

Larry Hodges will be teaching another ITTF Coaching seminar at MDTTC, on the weekends of Aug. 11-12, 18-19. [Here's the info flyer.](#) If interested, [email him.](#) Sessions are 9AM-Noon, 1-4PM each day, 24 hours total. Fee is \$225. The seminar has been featured on the [USATT home page](#) the last few days. Graduates become ITTF and USATT certified coaches. Since this is an "introductory" coaching seminar (ITTF Level 1), all levels of coaches and players are welcome to attend. You'll not only learn about coaching, you'll learn a lot more about the game itself.

Sports Psychology Night

On Friday night, June 22, [Table Tennis Sports Psychologist Dora Kurimay](#) traveled down from New York to give a sports psychology workshop at the Maryland Table Tennis Center. About fifteen players attended. The workshop went over the main points of her book, "[Get Your Game Face On!](#)" (Here's my [review of the book](#) on the USATT web page.) Topics included the Four R's (Reaction, Recovery, Ready, and Ritual), the inseparable relationship between emotional, mental, and physical (the "Game Face Performance Triangle"), and other sports psychology topics.

MDTTC Web and Facebook Pages

Don't forget to see the regularly updated [MDTTC Facebook page](#), and make sure to "like" it! Greg Mascialino has been extremely helpful in setting this up. 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.

United States Nationwide Table Tennis League

This is a new nationwide league that is being set up all over the country, with \$100,000 in prize money. [See their webpage](#) for info. Entry deadline is June 30. There may be another emailing to the MDTTC mailing list about this later. (Larry Hodges is on their [Advisory Board](#).)

Tip of the Week: Dealing with Cheaters and Poor Sportsmanship

By Larry Hodges

How should one deal with people who cheat or have bad sportsmanship? There is a simple answer which would make this article very short: call for an umpire. However, umpires are not always available (and most of your matches will likely be practice matches anyway, where there are normally no umpires), so sometimes you'll have to deal with this on your own, especially if it's only poor sportsmanship, not outright cheating. Besides, you don't want to call for an umpire every time you think an opponent looks at you funny, so when possible, deal with the problem on your own.

Cheaters cheat because they want to win. There are limits to how you can deal with this short of calling for an umpire. If the opponent simply calls the score wrong, the remedy might be to simply call the score out loud every point, so the score is absolutely clear to you, your opponent, and anyone watching. Cheaters don't like this because it's hard to argue about the score when it's been called out loudly and clearly every point.

But there are other types of cheaters. They may serve illegally; use illegal surfaces; call lets on points that are not lets; claim their shot hit the edge or that your edge ball missed; and many other ways. You might

be able to deal with some of these on your own. For example, if an opponent serves illegally (probably the most common form of "cheating"), politely explain why the serve wasn't legal. Ideally, catch the illegal serve and explain why the serve was illegal. If you attempt to return it, then the point counts. But you can still ask the opponent to serve legal between points.

If an opponent refuses to serve legally, and you can't get an umpire, then you are basically stuck, so deal with it. In tournaments you usually can get an umpire for this, but rarely in practice. And surprisingly, many umpires are reluctant to call many illegal serves. So you may have to learn to deal with some illegal serves. (Some illegal serves don't really give much of an advantage to the server, other than the fact that if they have to serve legally, they wouldn't be able to use their normal serves and they'd have difficulty serving effectively. Other illegal serves give a direct advantage to the serve, such as hiding contact, throwing the ball backwards into the racket, or excessively short tosses.)

Illegal surfaces are usually easier to deal with. You are allowed to examine an opponent's racket at the start of the match. If he has an illegal surface, even if there is no umpire you can ask the referee to look at it, and let him handle it. If there is no umpire or referee (i.e. usually a practice or perhaps a league match), then you'll have to deal with it on your own, and ask him to use a legal surface, or (as often happens in practice matches), just deal with it, and decide later whether to avoid playing that person again until he gets a legal surface. Except possibly in practice, you'll rarely have to deal with a player using the same color on both sides, but this can come up. Probably the most common illegal surface is frictionless long pips, which usually comes about when an opponent takes a legal long pips and treats it (usually with heat) to make them frictionless. Unfortunately, this is difficult to umpires or referees to judge.

Other types of cheating are harder to deal with. There's not a whole lot you can do if your opponent claims your edge ball missed or hit the side, or that his shot off the end or into the side hit the edge, or if he calls illegal lets or disagrees with your own rightly-called let. Of course, he may have just not seen what you saw, or perhaps you missed seeing what he saw, so don't be too quick to judge the opponent a cheater. Regardless of who is right, the only way to resolve a dispute like this is to call a let, which favors the one who is either wrong or outright cheating. It's up to you whether to call for an umpire (if available), using your own judgment over whether you think it will happen again.

Now the good news about cheaters: they are surprisingly few of them. Part of this is that repeat offenders get to be known, since not only opponents but people on the sidelines see it happening, and so most who might cheat quickly stop rather than face ridicule. However, there are always a few players, even at tournaments, who are regular cheaters. They are often well known to referees, who often watch these players and are quick to assign an umpire if needed. I've played tournaments where well-known cheaters informally had full-time umpires assigned to their matches.

There's a large overlap between cheating and poor sportsmanship, since cheating is simply a major form of poor sportsmanship. Players with poor sportsmanship outnumber actual cheaters. At tournaments there simply are not enough umpires to deal with every problem, so unless an opponent actually cheats, try to deal with most poor sportsmanship on your own.

There are two types of people who have bad sportsmanship. There are those where poor sportsmanship is simply a bad habit. And there are those who do it intentionally to gain an edge.

Examples of poor sportsmanship are forcing you to wait for them as they show up late; taking excessive time between points; constant complaining; any type of derogatory or belittling talk at an opponent; excessive yelling; or general bad behavior. Sports can bring out both the best and worst in people, and in many cases, it's the worst. One way to deal with most of this, if it doesn't actually break the rules, is to ignore it. Better still, become stronger because of it. If an opponent is constantly complaining or yelling, then he's obviously under great emotional stress. What a huge advantage that is for you if you are calm and relaxed!

The worst type of poor sportsmanship is when it's done intentionally to gain an edge. Suppose you show up for a match, and your opponent intentionally makes you wait for him. You can't really prove he did it on

purpose, but the effect is the same: you are stuck out on the court waiting for his grand entrance. Just smile to yourself, knowing the opponent is so worried about the match he feels he needs even this tiny edge - and by doing so, you gain the edge.

The same is true of other types of bad behavior. Some opponents yell a lot between points; ignore it, or perhaps (if it is in your nature) occasionally yell yourself when you win a big point. The key here is that you don't want to feel intimidated by the opponent's yelling. Again, remember he's doing so because he's under emotional stress, and because he's worried about losing. So take it as a compliment, and turn it into your own edge.

It's when an opponent yells directly at you that he goes completely over the line. It's one thing to raise your fist and yell "Yes!" after winning a point. It's another to raise your fist directly at your opponent while looking him in the eye. There's no real rule against this, but it's poor sportsmanship, and some umpires and referees will warn an opponent against this. The worst case I ever saw of this was when a top 13-year-old was up 2-0 in games against a top U.S. player in a best of five. It was looking like a huge upset. In the third game the top player (who was over six feet tall and towered over his opponent, who was small for his age) won the first point, walked over to the 13-year-old's side of the table, put his fist right in the kid's face, and yelled "Yaaaaaah!" I was coaching the 13-year-old, and called for the referee immediately. It turned out the referee had seen this, but rather than default the opponent as I requested, he only warned him. The kid I was coaching was badly shaken and could barely continue. He played on half-heartedly, and lost badly three straight games.

How can one deal with such a situation? It's very difficult unless you already were playing with a clear mind. Then you can look at it analytically, realize how scared the opponent is of losing, and turn his outburst into your advantage. Confidence usually beats nervous displays of arrogance.

Here are a three simple points to remember when dealing with cheaters and poor sportsmanship.

1. If possible, call an umpire. But be ready to deal with it on your own if necessary.
2. Calling the score loudly every point will deter most score-changing cheaters as well as those who simply forget the score.
3. Always remember it is their fear of you that causes them to act this way. Turn that to your advantage with your own confident play.

Last of all, there are those who read the above, and are copiously taking mental notes on how to use cheating and poor sportsmanship to gain an edge. I have one word for you: *DON'T!*