

MDTTC News

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MDTTC April Open Finalists!

Top, L-R: Open Champion Chen Ruichao ("Alex") and Finalist Cheng Bo Wen ("Bowen");

Under 2400 Champion Bojun Zhangliang ("Brian") and Finalist Nathan Hsu;

Under 2250 Champion Lixin Lang and Finalist Wang Zibing.

Middle, L-R: Under 2050 Champion Gong Yunhua and Finalist Ryan Dabbs;

Under 1900 Champion Justin Bertschi and Finalist Darwin Ma;

Under 1650 Champion Daniel Yang and Finalist Anne Chanakya.

Bottom, L-R: Under 1400 Champion Adam Kandel and Finalist Daniel Gong;

Under 1150 Champion Daniel Sofer and Finalist Callie Xu;

Under 13 Champion Benjamin Clark and Finalist Callie Xu.

Archive of past [MDTTC Newsletters](#)

Welcome to the 23rd 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 sponsor [Butterfly North America](#). 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](#)

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Butterfly MDTTC April Open Summary

74 players participated in our April Open, once again run with flawless efficiency by MDTTC Tournament and League Director Charlene Liu. Players from Maryland, Virginia, DC, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and even Justin Bertschi of Houston, Texas competed in the nine events. Ruichao ("Alex") Chen, MDTTC's new coach/practice partner, dominated the Open, winning final over fellow coach/practice partner Chen Bowen. [Click here for all the playoff results](#). The complete results (including preliminaries) are available at [Omnipong](#).

Feature Coaches: Jeffrey Xun Zeng & Alex Ruichao Chen

MDTTC welcomes back Coach Jeffrey, who was coaching in China & Taiwan and competing in tournaments in Asia the last 20 months, and welcomes new coach/practice partner Alex (Chen Ruichao).

Coach Jeffrey (nephew of Olympic gold medal winner Chen Longcan 陈龙灿) was a member of the Sichuan Province Team and has many years of experience as a coach and player. For several years, he coached at the elite Kaohsiung Fu Cheng High School that produced the strongest high school team in Taiwan. He also coached the Mikihouse Team in Japan and the United Arab Emirates National Team before moving to Canada in 2010 to coach full-time for the Greater Vancouver Table Tennis Association in Canada. In 2011 he came to MDTTC as a full-time coach; he coached U.S. Champions Peter Li and Han Xiao. He won many major tournaments in North America, including the Canada's Western Open, British Columbia Men's Singles Champion, the 2011 Cary Cup Championships and the Eastern Open, two of the largest tournaments in the U.S., and several MDTTC Opens. ***Please call [240.565.8783](tel:240.565.8783) to schedule private & semi-private lessons with Coach Jeffrey.***

Coach Alex, a lefty shakehand looper, was a member of China's Elite Shanghai Team and has trained with the Chinese National Team. He played in the Chinese Super League for the Hangzhou Nirui Club in Zhejiang Province, and he played in the top division of Swedish Super

League. This past weekend he won the MDTTC April Open. *Please call [301.519.8580](tel:301.519.8580) and ask for Coach Jack to schedule private lessons with Coach Alex.*

Featured Player: Crystal Wang

Crystal is featured in the April 7 issue of *Sports Illustrated* in the "Faces in the Crowd" feature, which is also [online](#). There is a feature article on her coming out in the next issue of USA Table Tennis Magazine. Crystal was also featured by US China Press: [article in Chinese](#). In addition, Jim Butler created feature videos of all the U.S. team members for USATT, including one on [Crystal](#) (3:51).

Crystal has been on fire recently. This past weekend, Crystal won both the Girls' Singles & Teams event at 2014 ITTF Canadian Junior & Cadet Open. In the March she made the U.S. Women's Team, finishing third in the U.S. Team Trials in Ft. Worth, Texas, to become the youngest U.S. team member ever, at 12 years 14 days. Crystal is now the #1 ranked girl in the U.S. in Under 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17 Girls. She is also ranked #1 in Under 13 overall, girls or boys.

After-School Program for 2014-2105

Starting in January MDTTC has an after-school program that combines table tennis and schoolwork, with courtesy pickups at schools or houses. 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. The academic tutors are Larry Hodges and Wen Hsu. [Here's the brochure](#) with further info, including background on the tutors.

Ongoing Programs

- **Junior Classes** – new ten-week session began March 22-23- but you can join any time and pay a pro-rated fee. This is for beginning and intermediate juniors ages 6-14, with Coach Larry Hodges (with Jeffrey Zeng, John Hsu or Raghu Nadmichettu assisting), and are held Saturdays 10:30AM-Noon and Sundays 4:30-6:00 PM. There is also an upcoming Montgomery County School program your kids can attend, Thursdays 6-7PM, starting April 3. See the [Group Training page](#).
- **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 [Group Training page](#).
- **Private Coaching**, by Coaches Cheng Yinghua, Jack Huang, Larry Hodges, Jeffrey Zeng, Qingliang Wang, Alex Chen, Bowen Chen, James Chen, John Hsu, and Raghu Nadmichettu. See [Private Coaching page](#).
- **Leagues**. MDTTC runs three different leagues. Take your pick! They are the [Tuesday and Friday Leagues](#) (for all ages and levels), and the [Elite League](#). The Friday league is pretty much jammed, so we're hoping to get more in the Tuesday league.

MDTTC Birthday Parties

Want to have a table tennis birthday party? [Here's info](#)! Parties include one hour of coaching and games led by an MDTTC coach, usually Coach Larry.

Rental Space for Corporate and Private Events

MDTTC offers space rental for special corporate and private events. 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: Changing Bad Technique

By Larry Hodges

How does one go about changing bad technique? Most players use halfway measures, and when that doesn't work, they give up and go back to their old habits. They may try minor adjustments when a major one is needed. They may change from one poor technique to another. They may practice it properly, but then, before the proper technique is ingrained, they'll play competitive matches and fall back into old habits, thereby re-ingraining the poor technique. They may have an improper grip or stance which causes the poor technique. Or they simply don't know what needs to be fixed. How can you overcome this? Here are five recommendations.

First, drop out of tournaments and match play temporarily and focus on fixing the technique. Hit regularly with a coach or practice partner as you fix the technique. Playing matches will just reinforce the bad technique. If your goal is to really overcome poor technique and replace it with good technique, then you need to have an extended period where you focus on this, i.e. saturation training. That means only playing with a coach or practice partner, and doing drills where you can isolate the new technique so you can focus on doing it correctly.

Second, exaggerate the proper technique. If you don't rotate your shoulders enough on a shot, practice over-rotating until it becomes comfortable to do it the proper way. Shadow practice the proper technique over and over and OVER until you can do it in your sleep, on your deathbed, and most importantly, at deuce in the fifth.

Third, watch top players (live or on video) who do the stroke well, and visualize yourself doing it that way. The more you visualize it done properly, the more likely you'll do it properly. Then shadow stroke it as you visualize it.

Fourth, make sure your grip and stance are correct. If you get these two correct, then everything in between tends to fall into place. If you get one of them wrong, then fixing a problem somewhere else won't work unless you fix the root cause of the problem - the grip or stance.

Fifth, work with a coach. Fixing bad technique is his job. Let him do his job.

Let me emphasize item #1 above. In general it's best to play lots of matches and get as much tournament competition as possible when trying to improve (along with lots of regular practice, i.e. drills), but when you are making major changes to your game, it's best to take time off from competition. Perhaps make a goal to have your game ready for tournament competition for a specific tournament (or series of tournaments) six months or so away, and train specifically for that. I don't think you need to take six months off from playing practice matches, but perhaps two months of focused practice without matches would greatly help you in making these technique changes.