

North American Hardbat Championships

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Late News!
Chopper Steve Berger wins HB Open at 2000 US Nationals.
Details in next issue.



A NEW CHAMPION!

By Lorin Benedict, with photos by John Oros

The second annual North American Hardbat Championships were held on Nov. 23 - 24, 2000, during the third annual North American Team Championships at the Baltimore Convention Center. The event drew slightly fewer entries than last year's, but the play was no less spectacular, and those of us participating had loads of retro, long rally, thwak-thwak fun. Particularly since all matches were played on the elite courts later to be occupied by the likes of Fan Yiyong, Chen Longcan, and The Garbage Man!

Speaking of Señor Sewage, The Garbage Man (aka Tahl Leibovitz) made a small but memorable appearance in the **hardbat doubles** event, teaming up with Ashoo Jain to lose a

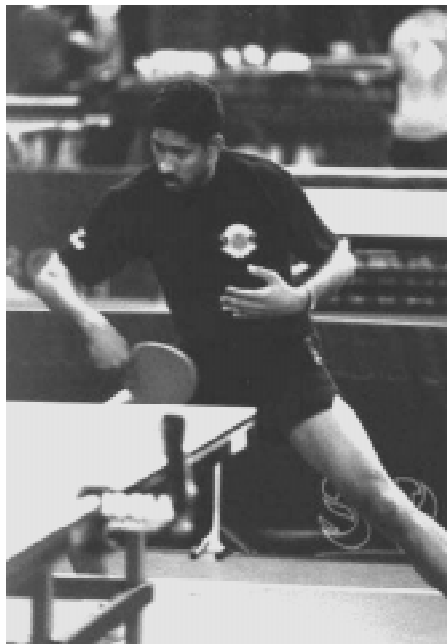
very close (12, -15, -18) semifinal match to Larry Hodges and Alexis Perez. Larry's usual partner, Ty Hoff, was notably absent from the competition, as was fellow Augustan and defending singles champ Xin Peng. In the other semi, Barry Dattel and Lily Yip beat Robert Mayer and Steve Berger (15, 15). The final was

all Barry and Lily over Hodges and Perez (16, 18). The husband and wife team has now won the event two years running.

The **U-2000** event featured long-time player/photographer John Oros over recent hardbat convert Bruce Liu in one semifinal (-12, 17, 12). In the other semi, veteran Tim Boggan defeated Julian Waters (who sported a very fetching "HARDBAT SUCKS" T-shirt throughout the whole competition) at (15, -15, 15). The final was a knock-down, drag-out fight between Boggan and Oros with Tim winning at (11, -19, 11).

Tim Boggan also made the **Over-50** final but lost that one to the formidable chopper Sam Balamoun (13, -17, 13). Sam proved to be a major figure in this tournament. Case in point: in the **Over-40**, he extended another *chopper extraordinary*,

Steve Berger, to three games, losing at (17, -19, -11). During this match it was evident that Sam's hitting was a major threat, even to the rock-solid Berger. But more about Sam later. The biggest surprise of this year's Championships was the performance of Ray Mack (UHRL 1692, but USATT 2083). He



Alexis Perez
North American Hardbat Champion

Continued on page 5

... and lead me not into temptation

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FORGIVE ME FATHER, FOR I HAVE SPONGED

Reverend Gordon,

I am in pain. The urge of using the evil sponge racket is growing stronger and stronger. I must confess.

I just returned from my second hardbat-only tournament in Portland. I knew I was weak. I knew I couldn't resist the temptation of using my sponge racket. Therefore, I deliberately left my sponge racket at home. Guess what? I was right.

I did fairly well in the hardbat event. I was the third seed. Scott Preiss was the first seed. There were no upsets until the semi-final. All the first four seeds played in the semi. The fourth seed George Kawamoto beat Scott Preiss. Second seed and eventual hardbat champion Steve Ma beat me 2:0 (13, 24). I was happy with the result.

The problem began with the sponge events. I played in U2300 and U1900. I couldn't play U2100 because of my late arrival. In the U1900 event, I was the fourth seed. Getting a bye in the first round, I won a match and advanced to the third round. I then faced a sub-1800 player. My major weapon, blocking, did not work effectively against his soft return. I couldn't gain any advantage by borrowing his power. He did not give me much to work with. Were it sponge, I could have blocked with more power. I am sorry. I could not help but wish that I had brought my sponge racket with me. I knew it was wrong but I just couldn't put it out of my mind. I had sinned.

I lead most of the first game. At 18-17 in my favor, the sponge-using devil took advantage of my hardbat game and won 21-18. I got the second game at about 16. The third game went back and forth. Neither of us could pull away. I was eventually out-slugged.

I even had problems when I won. I won my first match in the U2300 event. The opponent was not as strong as the other. However, he served long and fast topspin to me. Were it a sponge racket, I would have no problem returning his serve. However, my hardbat

return was slow and weak. I again had the sinful idea of using a sponge racket. God, what an ugly win! I derived no pleasure from it.

The second round match was fine. My opponent was one of the semi-finalists in Men's Open event that was beaten by Barney Reed. He came back from down two games beating Avishy Schmidt 3:2 in the quarters. He is one of the members of current Vietnamese National team. In fact, the whole Vietnamese troop came to play in the tournament. In the women's Open, three out of four semi-finalists were Vietnamese although Gao Jun came through to win the title fairly easily. Anyway, I was pretty happy playing with him although I lost (12, 13). His shots were much stronger than all my other opponents' in this tournament. I found my blocking worked again. I probably wouldn't have done better using a sponge racket this time. I was pretty happy with my first official "international" match.

Dear Reverend Gordon, I have a dilemma about whether I should use a sponge racket again. I have a hard time returning both soft shots and fast serves. I know my sponge game is not exactly spectacular. However, I can at least rely on the sponge to disguise many holes in my game. All my shortcomings were exposed while using hardbat. I felt I was playing naked. It was so embarrassing!. I know I shouldn't even think about sponge but the lure is so strong. I don't know how much longer I can hold on. Please pray for me. *It is truly chaotic out there!*

Sinned and troubled
Bruce
(Bruce H. Liu) ●

Answered on page 3

... science or religion?

HARDBAT BRETHREN,

Brother Liu is in crisis!

Not satisfied with his Sacramento and Portland performances using hardbat against sponge, he is doing what most of us mere mortals would do, and... oh I can hardly bear to say it... revert to the beast sponge.

So I need all your help in guiding Bruce through these hard times, and to help me give him the best advice. I find myself torn between my two selves:

(1) the Doctor, the man of science (now I know that Brother Benedict would dispute my scientific soundness, but I charge that my science is cutting-edge as evidenced by my defying the known laws of physics at least twice in our recent match), and

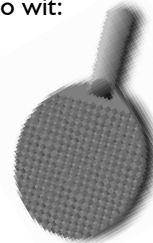
(2) the Reverend, the man of the cloth (even if it's just a cloth backing). The Reverend in me would remind Brother Liu that as a hardbat player he is a martyr for the god *Barna*, and needs to say 20 *hail-Marty's* and repel the beast sponge and it's evil temptations. That he is the mythical David facing *Gluiath*, and is assured eternal salvation win or lose. With each match, we all pray for a miracle sent from Hungary to grace us with another win.

As Reverend, I might also suggest a strategy for affirming his faith by actually increasing his martyrdom by switching to an old dime-store petrified paddle for a couple of tournaments, after which his hardbat will feel like sponge and he will thank the lord *Barna* for his generosity.

However, the scientist in me views this situation differently. The dreaded drug sponge has proven itself more addictive than heroin, and treatment should follow the same strategy. That is, rather than using the "cold turkey" approach, we can assume that the gradual weaning-off of the drug will eventually produce success.

In the case of heroin, it is a ghastly process which can take many weeks. Sponge, being a more powerful and insidious foe, would likely take much longer. A possible schedule might be to gradually reduce to thinner and thinner sponge over a 2 or 3 year period. To wit:

- 2.0mm - 3 months
- 1.9mm - 3 months
- 1.7mm - 3 months
- 1.5mm - 3 months
- 1.3mm - 6 months
- 1.0mm - 6 months
- 0.5mm - 12 months



... after which the switch to 0.0mm, a.k.a. hardbat, will finally be possible. Since Brother Liu is already a short pips player, such a schedule is natural. Treatment for an inverted player can be much more complicated, not to mention life-threatening.

So is the spiritual or scientific path the way to go? Let's call upon all of our collective scientific, theological, and god-fearing powers to bring the guiding light to Brother Liu in this his greatest hour of need.

Amen and/or QED,
Scott
(V. Scott Gordon) ●

“
... Brother Liu ...
as a hardbat player
he is a martyr
for the god *Barna*,
and needs to say
20 *hail-Marty's*...
”

Scribe
Luechinger

Brother
Benedict

Brother
Liu

Reverend
Gordon

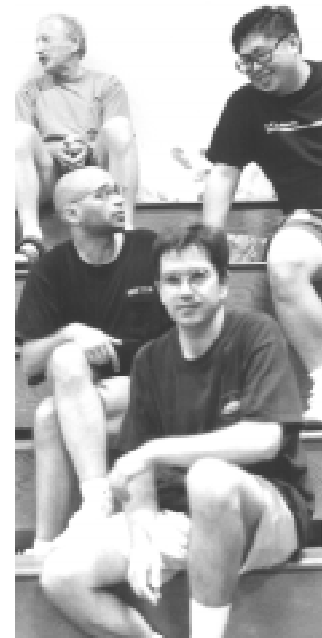


Photo by Joe Holman © 2000

MINUTES OF HARDBAT COMMITTEE MEETING

Marina Marriott Hotel
Fort Lauderdale, FL
July 7, 2000

Present

(some all, some part, of the time):

Scott Gordon (Chair)
John Grinnell (V. Chair)
Lily Yip, (Player Rep.)
Marty Reisman (Player Rep.)
Tim Boggan (Secretary)
Berndt Mann (Committee Member)
Mal Anderson; Ed Ball (who again generously provided us with what we've come to think of as Reed's "Official Hardbat Drink"); Lorin Benedict; Steve Berger; Houshang Bozorgzadeh; Bard Brenner; Homer Brown; Lim Ming Chui; Wally Green; Larry Hodges; Fadi Kaddoura; Victor Kan; Richard Lee; Caron Leff; Marv Leff; Bruce Liu; Hermann Luechinger; Dick Miles; Cameron Scott; Don Varian; and Alan Williams.

Not Present

Ty Hoff (Treasurer), John Starr (Committee Member).

As usual, Scott Gordon had arranged a well-organized Agenda, but the 8:30 p.m. starting time was reported erroneously by some to have been set back to 9:30, and so the formal Meeting was delayed to accommodate late arrivals and secure a quorum of officers. Eventually, those present were introduced. Treasurer Ty Hoff was not present because he was

defending his U.S. Open Hardbat Championship and, a la Tiger Woods, was focused solely on that. (Yes, Ty won again—and from an encouraging turnout of 70 players.) Thus, there was no formal Financial Report.

Items

Richard Lee, Tournament President of the North American Team Championships that will be held Nov. 24-26 in Baltimore, had prepared and now distributed an entry blank that included various events in his 2000 North American Hardbat Championships that would begin on Nov. 23, Thanksgiving Day. Players would be able to play in these and also in the Team Championships proper.

In Manchester, England, prior to the July 5-9 U.S. Open, Reisman, Berger, and Gordon (in place of John Tannehill, who, unprepared, had last-minute passport problems) represented the U.S. against a Hardbat English Team that included Dennis Neale, formerly one of the world's Top 10 players. Alas, though Berndt Mann continued to sing our praises, and John Grinnell to echo them in his inimitable voiceovers, we lost. However, the event generated enthusiasm for Hardbat play, and all our players reported they were treated very hospitably.

Question: Will future Hardbat events be played with the post-Olympics 40 mm ball or the current 38 mm ball? Answer (after a vote): Whatever ball the tournament organizer uses, that's the one the Hardbat players will use too. Reisman wanted to stick with the 38 mm ball, but others felt it wouldn't be long before there just wouldn't be any top quality 38 mm balls. Also, since many hardbat players participated in non-hardbat events, it'd be better for them if they didn't have to repeatedly switch from one ball to another.

A change was made in our "Blade Definition." The definition now reads: "The blade shall be comprised solely of rigid wood (no carbon or other non-wood plies). The handle may incorporate decorative non-wood inserts or inlays. If two hitting surfaces are used, both surfaces must be identical, and the composition of the blade must be internally symmetrical with respect to each surface. That

is, it shouldn't matter which surface is used to hit the ball...they both must be identical." *President's editorial note:* The purpose of the modification was to strike the reference to "USATT-approval."

There was a discussion about following up on our Hardbat requests to the USATT regarding (a) Rules ratification (these had not yet been officially incorporated by the USATT Board of Directors); (b) a Senior event; and (c) a Two-Color Exemption for those playing with Hock rackets.

Reisman continued to be concerned with racket surfaces. Question: When can a player change his/her racket? Answer: Only between games (with no warm-up permitted). *President's editorial note:* Steve Berger offered to write the wording of the new rule. He did so the next day.

A suggestion was made that we formalize our Membership — make sure we know how many women, how many juniors, would really be part of a Hardbat movement, would pay to be a member receiving the Newsletter. Can we offer a Women's, a Mixed Doubles, or a Junior event without any assurance of entries? (Note, though, the Thanksgiving 2000 North American Hardbat Championships is holding an Under 21 event, as well as Over 40/50/60 events.)

The idea of having separate Junior hardbat tournaments with money prizes was brought up. Such separation talk led Miles, for one, to speak of forming a Hardbat Association independent of the USATT.

Homer Brown was very interested in holding a Hardbat Invitational at his Birmingham BumperNets emporium.

Editor Lorin Benedict seeks contributions for future issues of our Classic Hardbat Newsletter.

Adjournment

Though talk continued among some of those present round this Marriott table and then wafted, as it were, to tables and chairs elsewhere, Scott formally adjourned the Meeting.

Minutes respectfully submitted by

Tim Boggan, Secretary ●

.....

A New Champion!, *continued from page 1*



*Lily Yip,
Championship Finalist*

defeated both Sam Balamoun (17 in the third) **and** Steve Berger (22 in the third) in the Over-40, later succumbing to Larry Hodges comparatively easily in the final (9, 17).

The Open Singles contained six round-robin groups of 3 - 4 players each. Lily Yip was the top seed, followed by Alex Perez, Larry Hodges, Robert Mayer, Steve Berger, and Ashoo Jain. All six made it out of their groups, as did four others (two players advanced from four of the groups). In the eighths, Sam Balamoun defeated Ashoo Jain (-21, 19, 18) in the first of his two major upsets. Sam's chopping somewhat nullified the effect of Ashoo's serves, and his infrequent but accurate hitting gave him a slight advantage. Tim Boggan defaulted to Steve Berger, Barry Dattel beat John Oros, and Philip Lim beat Alan Millett in a close three-gamer. In the quarters, Alex Perez rolled over Dattel (8, 14), Philip Lim avenged last year's loss to Robert Mayer by winning at

(17, 22), Lily Yip beat Steve Berger (14, 15), and in what may have been the upset of the tournament, Sam Balamoun defeated third seed Larry Hodges (19, 9). In the second game, it seemed to this reporter that the former hardbat champ's disgust with his performance might have gotten the better of him. The stage was set for Sam Balamoun (UHRL 1973) to meet the tournament's second seed (UHRL 2390).

Though Perez won this semifinal encounter, Balamoun put up a good strong fight, chopping nearly everything back and putting the ball away whenever possible. Match to Perez (18, 9, 19). In the other semi, Lily Yip gave something of a lesson to Philip Lim. Both players have a similar style (penhold blocker-hitters), but Lily's controlling and aggressive backhand made a huge (8, 9, 14) difference.

The final was a familiar struggle between the top seeded penhold ace and an athletic topspin roller, much like the titanic clashes between Lily and Ty over the past few years. As many spectators were quick to point out, however, Alex's game is peppered with a bit more defense than Ty's. This resulted in rallies that were even more spectacular than the best of the Ty-Lily encounters. Often Perez would simply spin Yip out of the point, but just as often he would win by chopping back at the barriers. In short, his extreme athleticism allowed him to return seemingly unreachable balls. Though she trounced him in the first game, 21-8, his spinning-retrieving rhythm found its groove after that as he swept the next three 21-13, 21-17, 21-10.

Two questions immediately came to mind after watching the final: 1) Will Lily **ever** win a national hardbat singles title? Never has a player seemed so deserving (she is now a five-time finalist!), yet she has been repeatedly controlled by players slightly more consistent than she. 2) How long will it be before our new champion, Alex Perez, wins at the Open or the Nationals? His down-to-the-wire loss to Ty Hoff in last year's US Open semifinal showed that he has the stuff to win. But can he overcome the US Hardbat world's perennial king? Only time will tell. ●



*Tim Boggan
Winner U-2000*



*John Oros
Finalist U-2000*



*Larry Hodges
Winner Over 40*

Panic Attack

SATOH'S Good... But his bat may be what makes him better

(See "Classic Hardbat Table Tennis," Summer 2000)

Another View

The following excerpt is from ITTF President Ivor Montagu's article, "The Satoh Racket," written shortly after the Bombay World's for the May, 1952 issue of the English "Table Tennis" magazine.

Courtesy of
USATT Historian
Tim Boggan

Photos:
English "Table Tennis"
magazine

Ivor Montagu
1904-1984

At age 18
Founder of English
Table Tennis Association

In 1926
Co-Founder of ITTF,
President 1926-1967

IJSHF

“...The decisive victory of H. Satoh in the World Championship Men's Singles using a soft rubber racket has led to an agitated propaganda against this type of play...

Most of this situation derives from panic or sensationalism on the part of the ill-informed. A review of the facts should be helpful.

1 Satoh's racket is made of soft, sponge aerated rubber about 5/16 inch in thickness. For half its thickness it is embedded into the surface of its square wood blade, as a picture in a frame. The rubber, like soft India rubber, is very easily abraded or broken, and to prevent its abrasion by shaking during carriage, Satoh keeps it in a soft-lined box, as the ordinary racket is kept in a canvas cover.

The effect of the soft rubber is:

(a) To impart an unfamiliar degree of spin (i.e. the degree cannot be foreseen by the opponent on the basis of the arm movement he sees, interpreted in the light of his experience of the ordinary racket).

(b) To impart an unfamiliar speed (i.e. the margin of speed between a 'floater' returned with a stop-motion of the hand, and a springy plain hit or half-volley return of the opponent's hit, is surprising to those not familiar with the style).

(c) To heighten the surprise in speed and direction of a hit by the lack of sound in the stroke.

2 [Montagu points out the fact, and defends it, that the ITTF allows Satoh's or anyone's racket "to be of any material, size, shape or weight." Then he continues with another fact:]

3 Soft rubber of the Satoh type, and the Satoh-type game, are no novelties...

Sponge rubber [has been used in the past and] is used by contemporary players in France as well as Austria and England.

Nishimura used it in Bombay for continuous hitting. In this type of game, it seemed

to give her no noticeable advantage in comparison with her team-mate Narahara (ordinary hard pimple-rubber). Neither of these two was good enough to trouble the first-class chop defences of Rozeanu, Farkas, Pritzi, Elliot...

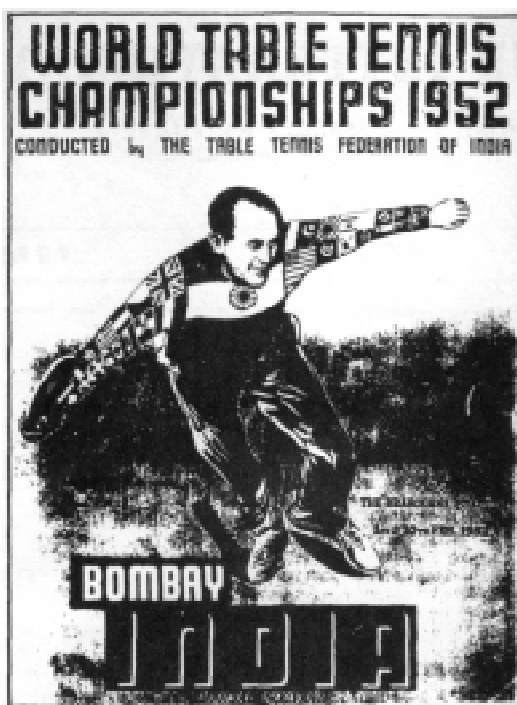
4 Some people say that, because Satoh is not the top player in his own country [Japan] (he is ranked No. 5), he is a lucky winner and not a worthy champion...

[But the Champion has risen to the occasion,... is better on the

day. More cannot be asked of him.

5 It is suggested that the way in which Satoh won his matches spoiled the game for the spectators. This is silly... [Consider] 'the obvious excitement of the spectators and delight in his [Satoh's] matches'...

[Denigrators consider Satoh's play a mere novelty. Also, they argue that his racket] gave an 'unfair' advantage which spoiled the game and must therefore be barred, as finger-spin service was barred.



Satoh's bat, continued on page 7

Satoh's bat, continued from page 6

The analogy is false. [A] player who perfected finger-spin could win the majority of services by a wide margin, and so the match without necessarily possessing any special skill....A player cannot be outstanding with a soft racket unless he is outstandingly intelligent and skilful as an all-round executant.

They argued that Satoh's method of 'blanketting' his opponent - swathing him, as it were, in a large, soft pillow-case - is unbeautiful and unspectacular.

It is true that two hitters came to grief against Satoh - Sido and Reisman. The former in particular after he seemed to have solved the puzzle and had the game well-won. But Reisman has lost this year to Ehrlich, Roothoft, Amouretti and even Freundorfer. And how many times have we not seen Sido collapse similarly against orthodox defenders - and for the same reason, an attack of nerves and retreat into his shell (a half and half game, neither defence nor attack)?

But the main exclamations were evoked by Satoh's thoroughness in dealing with world-renowned players who tried to push him - Bergmann, Leach, Amouretti and Roothoft....These are all players with attacks too weak to overcome each other's defences....

Satoh very competently floated back their efforts at attack, and when they tried to play steady, lulled them to sleep with ultra-gentleness and then suddenly punched them as full of holes as a cheese. How anybody unbiassed (or indeed anyone except the victims) could honestly say this was not fascinating, skilful, and about ten times as exciting as any of the said victims' wrestling matches with each other has me beat....

If Satoh is to be thought of as in any sense lucky, it is that he did not have to meet anyone who knew his game before Bombay or anyone twice at



Bergmann and Leach in Japan. Triumphal procession through the streets of Sapporo.

Satoh's bat, continued on page 8

Here are Satoh's winning scores from some of the matches Montagu, making his point, noted:

- Koczian 19. 17. 14
- [Koczian was leading 19-12!]
- Sido -19. 20. 4. 13.
- Bergmann -10. 13. 15.
- Leach -18. 10. 13.
- Amouretti 5. 8.
- Reisman -18. 12. 15. 12.
- Lanskoy 12. 10.
- De -20. 13. 17.
- Ramos -16. 15. 23.

Bombay....He [Satoh] can be hustled, and a weakness of soft rubber is that it does not return hits so low and fizzing and unput-awayably as hard rubber.

It was extremely significant that he had no answer whatever to Koczian's steady play, interspersed with sudden accurate forehands on his own account, until Koczian lost his head and his grip and, to all intents and purposes, threw the match away.

That, indeed, was the way most players lost to him. Unable to anticipate by the usual signs (arm movement, sound, etc.) the only way they could cope was by watching each ball sepa-

rately with super-concentration onto their own rackets. Winning this way a big lead, or even the first game, they would relax an instant, either from overconfidence or by exhaustion reaction. In what seemed a terrifying short space of time their hard-won lead would have disappeared, either from themselves sliding unwatched balls into the net or off the table, or from Satoh hitting past them balls they had slid too high. Then they panicked and the game was over.

Note, please, all the world, how much difficulty Satoh had in beating De and Ramos, by no means class Indian and Portuguese players, before these knew he was any good - compared to the surrenders of the champions in mortal

panic after Bergmann and Leach had shown the way to ruin..... ”



No. 750
The Hon. IVOR MONTAGU (I.T.T.F. President and C.T.A. Chairman) discusses the sponge-surfaced racket of World Champion Satoh with IVAN ANDREADIS, Czechoslovakia's stylish No. 1, at a recent meeting. Meanwhile, Richard Bergmann and Johnny Leach were actually in Japan establishing a convincing supremacy for "orthodox" styles. (12/7/53)

The Swaythling Cup,
the World Champion Men Team Trophy, is named after Ivor Montagu's mother, Lady Gladys Goldsmith Montagu Swaythling

IJSHF



Photo courtesy of Tim Boggan and Larry Hodges

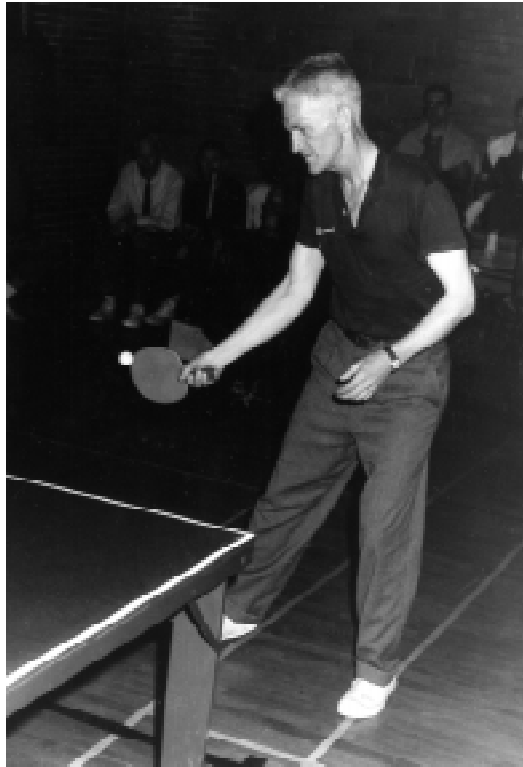
The Swaythling Cup System

Team 1: Players A, B, C
Team 2: Players X, Y, Z

Matches

1	A - X	6	C - Y
2	B - Y	7	B - Z
3	C - Z	8	C - X
4	B - X	9	A - Y
5	A - Z		

“...I am still playing and plugging [away] at the business. Since sponge came in about 12 years ago my business has been a trying ordeal. After writing to Japan for 10 years I am finally getting enough lightweight sponge to almost supply the orders[No sooner do] I get one problem solved, another pops up. The **Leyland rubber** that I am getting now is about 1/2 bad, can't be used on first class bats. No use complaining to them, as I hear they are about to discontinue making rubber for bats. Plywood will go up 30% July 1...[They] made me up some of [the] lightest and best 5



*Bernard Hock, 1961
Photo © Malcom Anderson*

ply plywood that I have ever seen. I got an order (enough for about 1200 bats) ... [Now] they tell me that they can't get the

veneers to make me any more.

Add these woes to the customer complaints, and one often wonders why I keep making bats. I always hoped that some day everything [would] work out just right, and [I] could make money. I would have been better off working as a clerk in a store for [\$] 60. or [\$] 70.00 a week. And [then again] maybe not. T.T. has been a lot of fun for me.....”

A Lot of Fun

*Excerpt from
Bernie Hock's letter to
CA Hall of Famer
Si Wasserman,
June 14, 1966:*

*Courtesy of
USATT Historian
Tim Boggan*

Leon Ruderman



Photo by Tong Lee © 2000

Over 70 Doubles Silver Medalists

*10th World Veteran's
Championships*

*Vancouver
May 2000*

Tim Boggan

Recent Results

August 2000

Florida State Championships (FL)

1st: Rafael Flores
2nd: Simon Jacobsen

St. Louis Gateway Open (MS)

1st: John Oros
2nd: Jimmy Kimple

Matthew Murad Memorial (MD)

1st: Larry Hodges
2nd: Tim Boggan

U-2000

1st: Tim Boggan
2nd: Bchara Janadri

Doubles

1st: Hodges/Boggan
2nd: Julian Waters/Michael Shen

September 2000

Sacramento Fall Open (CA)

1st: Freddie Gabriel
2nd: Thanh Nguyen
3rd: Englebert Solis

Garden State Open (NJ)

1st: Steve Berger and Lim Ming Chui (split)
SF: Berger def. Li Jun Wang
Chui def. Larry Hodges

October 2000

Western Open on the North American Tour (CA)

1st: Loc Nao Ngo
2nd: Nick Mintsiveris

U-2000

1st: Allen McDermott
2nd: Bill Ukatayasukul

Southern Indiana Hock Open (IN)

1st: Don Brazell and Chris Earls (split)

U-1800:

1st: Greg Galbreath

Southern Open (TX)

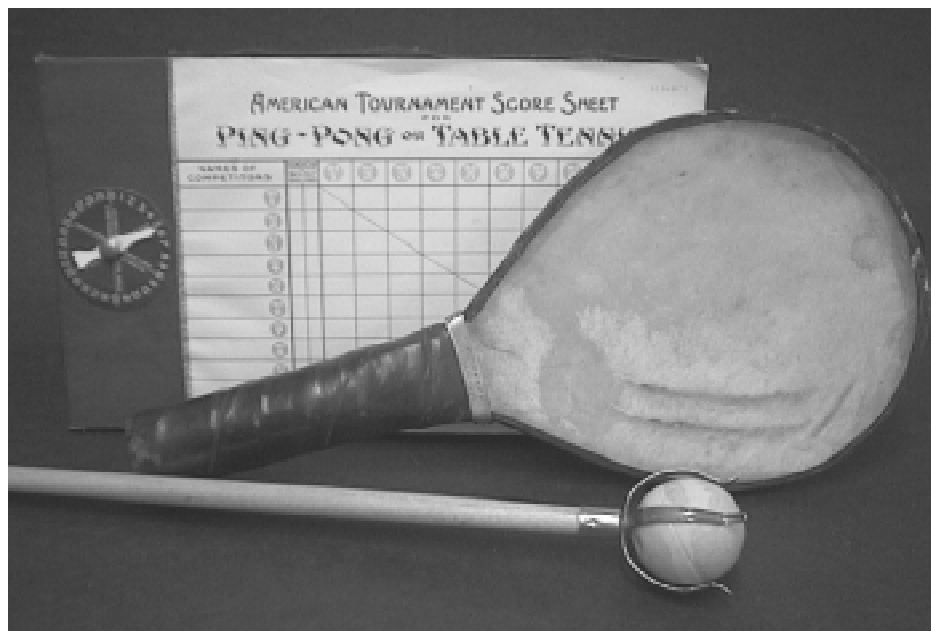
1st: Victor Subonj
2nd: Tajudeen Oshodi
SF: Subonj def. Wally Green
Oshodi def. Hector Bennet

Early Ping-Pong Equipment

Battledore*
Ball Picker-upper
Ball
Scoreboard

Photo courtesy of Chuck Hoey

*Battledore: Bat
(But you already knew that,
though my Webster's didn't.)



This is the third issue in which we show a celebrity playing table tennis.

Who is it?

Do you recognize this famous competitor?

Who was it?



Last issue's celebrity: **Pele, the world's most famous soccer star.**

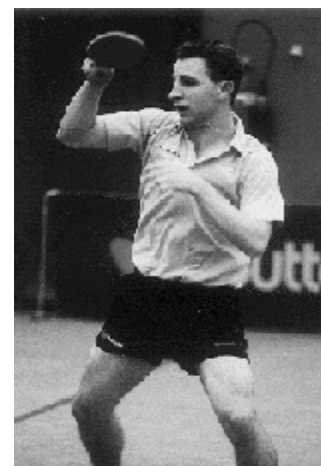


TOP 25 Hardbat Ratings (11/29/2000)

1	2531	MD	Sweeris, Todd	16	2322	IN	Seemiller, Daniel
2	2531	TX	Subonj, Victorian	17	2322	NV	Doyle, Dean
3	2520	GA	Peng, Xin	18	2316	NY	Leung, Che Him
4	2490	GA	Hoff, Ty	19	2302	MD	Fraiman, Gary
5	2469	OH	Tannehill, John	20	2296	TX	Mayer, Robert
6	2443	NJ	Yip, Lily	21	2295	NY	Berger, Steve
7	2420	KY	Brazzell, Donald	22	2287	NY	Reisman, Marty
8	2411	TX	Butler, James	23	2279	CA	Ngo, Loc Bao
9	2409	TX	Oshodi, Tajudeen	24	2278	CA	Anderson, Tait
10	2392	MD	Masters, Brian	25	2263	NJ	Jain, Ashoo
11	2391	NY	Perez, Alexis				
12	2364	NY	Leibovitz, Tahl				
13	2350	NJ	Rabinovich, Boris				
14	2341	GA	May, Derek				
15	2341	MD	Hodges, Larry				

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