



My campaign statement for USA Table Tennis (TT)  
- How to Expedite TT Popularity by Lim Ming Chui

Table tennis is the sport I love, and it has shaped my life. As a 41-plus year member of the USATT, I have often thought of ways to improve and increase membership to make our organization the best it can be. To do this, the USATT leadership must make some changes to demonstrate the power and appeal of the sport and to lure new membership and regain the support of the USOC. The following is a list of ideas I believe would strengthen the USATT and its visibility as a popular sport in America:

1. Introduce multi-tiered tourneys throughout the country to allow members and non-members to acquire “New USATT TT Black Belt Classes/Ranking” that is refreshed annually.

(We can imitate the existing Black Belt Classes in other sports, or invent our own. For example, annual multi-tiered Pre- and Post Black Belt Tourneys (on fixed Saturdays/Sundays advertised by USATT nationally on multi-sites throughout the country): first Pre- Black Belt tier could be White Belt which is awarded to top 25% of any round robin tourney of four or more players without any Belt classes; thus second Pre- Black Belt tier would be Yellow Belt which is awarded to top 25% of any round robin tourney of four or more White Belt Class players; and so on for up to the ninth Belt Class which becomes Black Belt Level 1 – the Post Black Belt tourneys would be similar in format. These Pre- and Post Black Belt tourneys could be held in conjunction with USATT Rating events – USATT would collect a fee/per player from organizers in return for the advertisement of these Nationalized events.) Not only would this “power up” the language, it would increase play.

2. To develop, prolong, and sustain championship level devotion amongst our Elite players, grant annual “Champion Achievement Awards” to Elite players who support more than five “relevant” USATT tourneys per year.

(Relevant here means playing more than two players with similar ratings.)

E.g. Male: U15/U18/All/O50/O60 with USATT rating above 2450/2600/2700/2450/2350

Female: U15/U18/All/O50/O60 with USATT rating above 2300/2450/2550/2350/2250

(Other Bonuses: \$1000 per 25 points above the minimum rating threshold, Major International Singles Medal winners, High World ranking, etc)

(Elite players mushroom other players and fans – USATT would install attractive schemes to reward TT equipment manufacturers, who would fund these awards for win-win outcomes.)

3. Solicit, Promote, Encourage, and Teach Health Clubs, Schools, Churches, and Community Centers to include table tennis as a regular sporting activity.

(USATT would offer help as necessary to complement local organizers whose time and effort is key to success.)

4. Offer “TT Promotion Awards” to encourage entrepreneurs to seek news and free advertisement for TT via newspapers/ public TV etc.

(Awards will be based on their impact to TT – USATT would install attractive programs to lure TT equipment manufacturers to fund these awards since they are the direct beneficiary)

5. Increase membership via:

- Offer “Membership Drive Awards” for top 10 members annually that can enroll the most new members.
- Incorporate incentives for prolonged membership
- Incorporate re-initiation fee to discourage discontinued membership

USATT has succeeded and continues to shine with excellent formats in our tourneys. We have many round-robin events for all ages, sexes, skill levels (ratings) as well of different levels in paralympics. Most other countries only offer limited number of single elimination events. We also have started individual and team TT leagues... However, the bottom line is that we need more members. USATT needs to include more players—female, male, and junior members—to increase our image and revitalize table tennis locally and nationally. More promoters and more TT lovers are needed to volunteer their time and effort for this great sport.

I love TT; I firmly believe TT is one of the best sports for all ages, with infinite skill variations to fascinate anybody. During my 40+ years as USATT member, I have always been able to start a TT club where my family and friends could play. During my college years at MIT, I expanded the MIT TT club and started TT as a regular physical education course. After college, I was able to maintain top-10 national ranking for many years; I still am one of the top ranked players in my age group.

Almost as much as I love playing table tennis, I love coaching it. I was the youngest coach (age 15) of the Junior Team in HK; I am still coaching in a nearby Church every Saturday afternoon. Many of my students (including my three children) acquired 2200+ ratings with their dedicated devotion.

I believe one can devote to TT and still achieve whatever one wants to achieve! Many of my elite students become successful professionals: entrepreneurs, traders, doctors, dentists, engineers, professors, etc. Sometimes I reward straight A students with free coaching.

We have to learn from other successful sports; we need more TT-moms (analogous to soccer-moms). Most successful juniors have moms who are devoted to their sport. I need your help to elect me and assist me to help all of you to become competent ambassadors of TT, to lure more Americans to TT, especially moms with young children – we would want many American families to regard TT as a tool for the future success of their children.

As a first generation immigrant, I have enjoyed the many opportunities offered by our country. While many lament that there is not enough respect or fans for table tennis, I agree with you, and I hope you can elect me so I can work more effectively with you to change that!!!

But there is more of a problem confronting the leadership of the USATT. Cuts in funding and threats of losing most support from the USOC loom before us.

My first five suggestions might help dealing with the Cut in funding. Beyond that, however, we must examine ways to trim the head quarter staff e.g. reduce labor intensive tasks (Perhaps offer privileges to members to retrieve email addresses and/or phone numbers of other members on-line); contract groups such as NATT, to run as well as process US Major tourneys; revise the budget for National coaches based on events and coaching needs, etc.

A strategy for restoring the USATT-USOC relationship requires work from the grassroots up. We need to develop the sport to produce top-10 players in the world (these two items can be treated as one; the sooner USATT can get more players in the top-10, the better will be the USATT-USOC relationship)

- Expedite the process of establishing TT as inter-school and inter collegiate sports activity in schools and colleges.
- Encourage regular group training of our National teams (and reserve teams) with imported world ranked players
- Encourage and offer assistance to individuals such as Lily Yip to import top foreign players (in her case Chinese Juniors or young adults) (short or long durations) to play and train in our schools and TT clubs; and to lead our budding Juniors and young adults to attend foreign training camps
- Encourage and assist TT entrepreneurs, schools and universities to recruit top players (foreign or domestic) (part or full time) to be students/coaches.
- Work with ITTF President Adham Sharara, who has renewed the ITTF's offer to work with USATT in the areas of marketing, elite athlete development, and re-introduction of the ITTF Pro Tour (along with a profitable marketing strategy for USATT). Express interest through the USATT Board has in the joint ITTF-USATT initiatives, which USATT President Sheri Pittman presented to them at the Board's last meeting in July.
- Work with well established organizations, such as Paralympics, to provide meaningful tt career opportunities for Elite tt players and coaches.
- Encourage and develop plans to entice TT manufacturers to fund my idea two described above – so more top players of various age groups will be motivated to train, which should inspire more to follow; their momentum would push some of our Elite level players to top 10 of the world as soon as possible.

My experience and focus would help the Board to interact more effectively with each other.

- Team player with enthusiasm, dedication, dependability, and responsibility
- Always eager to seek cost-effective solutions to assigned tasks
- Easily accessible to share technical expertise.
- Toastmasters with computer expertise and ample experience in technical writing, and teaching graduate level seminar courses.
- Currently I work as a Lead Member for the Engineering Staff at Lockheed Martin, with many years of leading and managing projects with teams of engineers, programmers and technicians.

- Fluent in English and Chinese (many dialects, especially Mandarin and Cantonese) with two degrees from MIT.
- Traveled nationally and internationally representing the USA in many tournaments. As a result I know many players and coaches at all levels of play.
- For recent years, I visit professional clubs in China annually to keep abreast with the state of the art of tt, especially the championship level training techniques.
- I have run TT clubs in Massachusetts, Vermont, and New Jersey, and am aware of the problems confronted by small local clubs trying to obtain support and run tournaments.

Thus, as a life-long table tennis player, competitor, coach, and most of all, my passion and love of tt; I think I have a unique set of qualities to offer the USATT and to represent you. I have ideas, a plan, and a dedication that would contribute to US table tennis.

If you think my suggestions might invigorate the leadership of the USATT, please vote for Lim Ming Chui as Executive Vice President