

**MINUTES**  
**USATT Board of Directors Meeting**  
**(Colorado Springs, Sept. 23-24, 2005)**

**Board Members Present:** Sheri Pittman (SP), Jiing Wang (JW), Tong Lee (TL), Tim Boggan (TB), Robert Blackwell (RB), George Brathwaite (GB), Barney D. Reed (BR), Lily Yip (LY), Dell Sweeris (DS), Willy Leparulo (WL), Ashu Jain (AJ), Khoa Nguyen (KN), Whitney Ping (WP).

**Also Present:** USATT Executive Director Doru Gheorghe; USATT Programs and Marketing Coordinator Tommy Perkins; USATT Tournament & Equipment Coordinator Felisa Huggins; USATT Accountant Carolyn Van Der Wege; USATT Administrative Coordinator Joyce Grooms; USATT General Counsel Dennis Taylor; USA Table Tennis Editor, Webmaster, League and Club Programs Director Larry Hodges; USOC Sports Partnership Director Chris Vadala, USOC Sports Partnership Manager Lynn Wentland; and Guests: Christian Lillieroos, Alan Williams, and Sean O'Neill.

**Friday, Sept. 23**

After those present had introduced themselves, President Sheri Pittman called our attention to the two-day Agenda with its time-scheduled items, then gave her President's Report orienting us to an Overview of that Agenda. The Meeting's "Goals" were immediately put forward.

These included a Discussion of both the USATT's Finances and its Quadrennial and High Performance Plan objectives—the two enhanced by Friday evening Reports from the Treasurer and the Executive Director. Some specific objectives were: to improve the USATT's Marketing capabilities; to form a State Association structure; to expand the USATT League; to get the *USA Table Tennis* magazine on the newsstands; to focus on Women's Development; and, noting strong support from Texas Wesleyan University President Hal Jeffcoat, to work on Collegiate Strategy that would involve greater USATT-NCTTA collaboration.

Now that the Killerspin Arbitration Hearing was over and Sheri and Robert Blackwell had issued a Joint Statement, another Goal was to conclude what USATT/Killerspin issues remained, particularly the Sponsorship and Licensing Agreement between the two.

A third Goal had to do with Robert's recommendation that Board members read Jim Collins' *Good To Great*. This book, Robert and others thought, would give us a framework to improve our Strategic Planning. We needed, for example, to do something to stem USATT Membership Attrition. Perhaps proposed new organizational software for the Association would help in this and in other areas of concern?

Sheri's Agenda Overview included the Presidential representations she'd made in the U.S. and abroad. In addition to attending major U.S. Championships, she was very active at the Shanghai World Championships; attended additional Meetings with ITTF President

Adham Sharara and the Federation's Marketing arm; and, interested in cooperative alliances with our continental neighbors, she conferred with Brazilian TTA President Alaor Azevedo, and was a guest of the Guatemalan TTA at the Caribbean Championships.

Following Sheri's Overview, USOC Sports Partnership Director, Chris Vadala, assisted by USOC Sports Partnership Manager Lynn Wentland, addressed the Board. Chris spoke of USOC governance reform that would allow coaches and athletes to benefit from quicker, more responsive action. In writing new Bylaws for USA Taekwondo (it had suffered from poor leadership and had to be taken over), the USOC so liked the new template, with its streamlined efficiency, that it was now strongly urging (though not yet mandating) all NGBs to follow it. And of course if the USATT did so, it would have to change a number of its Bylaws—which in the course of this Meeting it would take steps to do. Chris stressed 10 points to this new Governance Model:

1. The Board is solely responsible for governing the Association.
2. The Board should be composed of 7-12 members.
3. Twenty percent of the Board members should be independents and twenty percent athlete reps.
4. Board terms of office should be staggered.
5. At a minimum, these committees have to be included: Audit, Compensation, Nominating, Governance, Ethics & Disciplinary.
6. Committees must be of a minimum size.
7. The role of management between the Staff and the Board must be clearly defined.
8. There must be transparency in all Association operations.
9. The Association must follow best practices.
10. The Association must comply with all USOC policies.

Since Chris encouraged questions, Dennis said he had some. What did "best practices" mean? Chris stressed established medal-winning, world-class training and coaching practices, but he conceded that the USOC is still working to determine exactly what "best practices" it wants NGBs to follow. Dennis asked where he could get an official copy of the 10 Governance Model points. Chris apologized, said that the 10 points weren't available for distribution. Dennis wanted to know whether the four NGBs who'd already accepted the new template were pretty much in agreement. Chris replied that the USOC Board was more interested in an NGB meeting the 10 points than in adopting the specific Taekwondo template. But, to answer the question, he said that, while some "give and take" was to be expected, in general, yes, the four NGBs that have recently reviewed their organizational structure and bylaws have essentially adopted the Taekwondo model as a whole.

Jiing wanted to know whether the Board or its E.D. had more overseeing authority. Chris said the E.D. did.

Barney asked if Sports Partners buy into our current High Performance Plan. Chris said he could get behind us if we had a high-level coaching program that supports athlete development. He also said that if the USATT put more money towards a serious athlete development program they would be inclined to do the same.

Chris spoke of Selection procedures—warned that for the 2007 Pan-Am Games, for example, these must be decided 15 months ahead of not the Games themselves but of the Selection event. Ashu, Khoa and Whitney were particularly interested in Selection Procedure. Follow-up questions and comments were made regarding what the size of this Pan-Am or any U.S. Team might be, how best to handle seedings and play, whether players on U.S. Teams were there based solely on results or whether a “best prospect” could be given a spot. In all, one needed to be careful about Age Discrimination.

When Chris made it clear that it would not be automatic for the USATT and other NGBs to receive the \$250,000 it had in the past, Robert asked whether the USOC believed we were on track to win medals. Chris didn’t answer definitively but said he was very interested in how our Elite and Cadet/Junior pipelines were progressing. Barney emphasized that to achieve our goals we needed a “Full Time Training Center,” preferably at the Olympic Training Center in Chula Vista. Chris responded by saying the first priority at that Center would be to expand the dorm space...adding that there would be no money for sports facilities in the near future. Barney feels the increased dorm space is a very positive step as it creates more opportunities for future athlete programs. Robert continued probing—asked Chris, “What do you have to see from our Plan?” Answer, of course: that our focus is on the athletes, on competitive excellence, and that we achieve strong international results.

After there were no more questions, Chris and Lynn left graciously, saying how pleased they were that we had Board Meetings here in Colorado Springs and they could attend.

Tong Lee gave us his Treasurer’s Report, part of which I note here. For the Fiscal Year 2004, “Revenues totaled \$1,245,000 against expenses of \$1,155,000, resulting in a net income of \$90,000.” It would have been \$24,000 more were it not for the “\$6,000 in legal expenses” and the “\$18,000 in convention hall expenses claimed by USATT as an obligation of Killerspin in the arbitration, but not awarded.” This \$90,000 exceeded the \$48,000 budget projection by \$42,000. “Net assets increased by \$90,000 from \$294,000 to \$384,000.” USATT Membership fees from 3-year, adult, and junior memberships totaled \$74,000. Fees for a Collegiate membership have stayed the same, and “a three-fold increase in collegiate dues accounts for why there’s “a three-fold increase in this membership category.” The Killerspin US Open and Pro Tour had an operating profit of \$12,000, but a net loss of \$12,000 after accounting for \$24,000 in 2004 arbitration expenses.

After Tong presented the 2004 Financial Statements that had been audited by the independent Auditor, he presented a Report showing the 2005 US Open Revenues and Expenses containing two columns. Tong said that the figures in this Report replaced the corresponding ones in the January-August financial statements distributed by the accountant days earlier. The first column shows the actual revenue and expenses of the 2005 US Open-Pro Tour. The second column was Tong’s estimation of what 2005 US Open revenues and expenses would have been under his interpretation of the Killerspin Licensing and Sponsorship Agreement (LSA). At this point, Robert interrupted Tong’s Report, calling column two on the US Open under LSA misleading and irrelevant. But Tong said that this was his Report and not Robert’s, and that column two was relevant for a Board discussion later. Tong also said that there still was a Killerspin LSA under which

USATT was obligated to run a Major Pro Tour and Killerspin was obligated to pay for TV production, a sponsorship fee, and other convention hall expenses associated with the Pro Tour. He stated that Robert's argument that the Pro Tour lost money, but not under LSA, and that therefore the USATT should not run a Pro Tour indicated a direct conflict of interest because Robert had a financial interest in a Pro Tour not being held. Robert objected, but Sheri told Robert to let Tong continue; Robert could comment or ask questions later.

Tong then took the Board through the figures of the two columns. In the 2005 US Open actual column, the figures showed that revenues totaled \$225,650 vs. expenses of \$261,607 that included the prize money totaling \$109,975—a figure that Robert wanted to see in the January-August financial statements. The operating loss for the US Open-Pro Tour was \$35,957. However, there also was \$90,814 in legal expenses directly associated with the 2004 Killerspin US Open that were incurred and recognized in 2005. In the second column, Tong said that the figures showed that if the terms of the agreement with Killerspin had been followed, then the US Open would have made about \$37,859 instead of a loss of \$35,957, resulting in a turnaround of \$73,817.07. Tong said that this proves that having a US Open-Pro Tour was profitable under LSA

Robert had serious objections to the Report, calling it ridiculous and bad accounting. He said that the only way the Pro-Tour could make money was if the USATT got someone else to pay the \$50,000 cost to produce television plus other ITTF obligations. He also mentioned that during the last Board Meeting when he asked Tong who was going to pay for the ITTF obligations for the 2005 Pro-Tour, Tong said, "We have a contract with Killerspin." Robert reminded Tong that during that Board Meeting he'd warned him that, because the USATT and Killerspin were in arbitration, the USATT should not incur expense expecting that Killerspin would pay.

After Tong finished his Report, which covered the 2004 Audited Financials and a presentation of the 2005 US Open Financials, Robert indicated he had questions about the USATT January-August 2005 Financials that Tong included in the Board member binder, but did not address in his presentation. He then proceeded to ask Carolyn the following questions regarding the expenses for the U.S. Open in the January-August 2005 financials statements:

\*Referring to the P&L vs. Budget-Detail spreadsheet, the U.S. Open shows the prize money to be \$109,975. The actual Prize Money recorded is \$9,975. The total Prize Money should be \$109,975 instead of \$9,975. Is this correct? Carolyn: Yes.

\*Go down to total U.S. Open Expense. The Total Expense should be \$352,420.54 instead of \$252,420.54. Is this correct? Carolyn: Yes.

Now go down to Net Income. There should be a loss of \$65,607.24 instead of a profit of \$34,392.76. Is this correct? Carolyn: Yes.

\*Referring to the P&L vs. Budget-Summary spreadsheet, the U.S. Open expense shows \$252,420.54. It should be \$352,420.54. Is this correct? Carolyn: Yes.

\*Go down to net income. It shows a profit of \$34,392.76. It should be a loss of \$65,607.24. Is this correct? Carolyn: Yes.

\*Referring to the Balance Sheet. The Accounts Payable shows \$12,965.92. It should be \$112,965.92. Is this correct? Carolyn: Yes.

\*Now go to Total Liabilities. It shows \$130,509.58. It should be \$230,509.58. Is this correct? Carolyn: Yes.

Now go to Net Income. There should be a loss of \$65,607.24 instead of a profit of \$34,392.76. Is this correct? Carolyn: Yes.

Now go to Total Equity. It should be \$318,817.15 instead of \$418,817.15. Is this correct? Carolyn: Yes

In an e-mail earlier to Executive Directive Doru, Treasurer Tong, and our Accountant Carolyn, Robert had called attention to a \$100,000 error on the books. Carolyn had explained to him as follows: "Note that the financial reports provided are for the period through the month of July 2005, and represented transactions recorded up to that period. It is correct that the budget for the 2005 US Open Prize money is \$106,000. But, the payout of \$6,000, which represents the prize money disbursed at the event for the domestic portion of the allocated prize funding, is correct. As of July 31, the additional \$100,000 for the Pro Tour had not yet been disbursed due to various factors. First, final calculations and invoicing must be completed after the event in order to receive the ITTF portion of the funding. (ITTF will be funding \$74,000 of the \$100,000 and USATT will provide the remainder of \$26,000). Second, due to IRS regulations, USATT is required to obtain proper documentation in order to process any prize money disbursed to foreign individuals. This includes completion of many forms, passport documentation, and treaty designations by country of origin. This must all be obtained and completed prior to the disbursement of the funding in order to withhold the proper taxes, which varies by country, required by the IRS. And last, the funds must be received from ITTF. Therefore, the additional \$100,000 in prize money and the subsidy from ITTF will be recognized and recorded when these transactions are completed and the checks are disbursed."

Now at the Meeting he objected to the fact that the correction he and Carolyn had allegedly agreed upon was not reflected in the financials provided to the Board by the Treasurer. Thus, while the January-August financial statements in the Board binder had recorded that from January through August, 2005 the Association had shown a net profit of \$34,392.76, it had actually lost \$65,607.24 because the \$100,000 that the USATT had to pay out in prize money for the 2005 U.S. Open wasn't included as an expense.

Robert was very specific in seeking confirmation from Carolyn as to what the correct facts should be in the financials in the binder - namely: (1) USATT Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet) as of August 31, 2005; (2) USATT Actual vs. Budget Summary (Income Statement Summary) for January through August, 2005; and (3) USATT Actual vs. Budget Detail (Income Statement Detail) for January through August, 2005. He asked her the following questions:

Carolyn confirmed Robert's following conclusions regarding the January-August financial statements:

With regard to (1): Of the USATT's \$85,053.28 in Accounts Receivables, \$74,000 is money due the USTTA in prize money from the ITTF....The Report shows the USATT as having \$12,965.92 in Accounts Payable, but, since the USATT still owes \$100,000 in Prize money for the 2005 US Open, the correct figure should be \$112,965.92....Robert and Carolyn had allegedly agreed previously that, since the

USATT was going to claim a \$74,000 receivable, then it had also to claim the \$100,000 liability.... So the correct Total Liabilities had to be not \$130,509.58 but \$230,509.58....The Net Income, reduced by the \$100,000, should show not an increase of \$34,392.76 but a loss of \$65,607.24. Thus the Total Equity should be not \$418,817.15 but \$318,817.15.

With regard to (2), the 2005 US Open expenses should be not \$252,420.54 but \$352,420.54; the Total Expenses should be not \$847,081.99 but \$947,081.99; and the Net Income should show not a gain of \$34,392.76 but a loss of \$65,607.24.

With regard to (3), the 2005 US Open Prize Money Expense should be not \$9,975.00 but \$109,975.00; the 2005 US Open Expenses should be not \$252,420.54 but \$352,420.54; the USATT Total Expenses should be not \$847,081.99 but \$947,081.99; and the Net Income should show not a gain of \$34,392.76 but a loss of \$65,607.24.

Dell, our Board member CPA, confirmed that the \$100,000 dollar obligation had to be included in the financials. He also said that we could recognize in the financials “a reasonable estimate of the amount [of insurance reimbursement] we should expect to receive.”

Jiing asked Dennis why the USATT spent \$90,000 in legal fees and expenses when he originally thought the cost would be less than \$30,000. Dennis said that most of the money was to defend the USATT against the Killerspin countersuit of \$450,000 (plus Killerspin’s legal and arbitration fees).

Doru in his Report covered several topics. He consulted with U.S. Team Leader Bob Fox and the USOC’s John Ruger regarding changes in Pan-Am Selection Procedures, and was waiting “for the Pan-Am technical manual in order to decide the team size.”

The USOC urges that the USATT do away with the following Tournament Committee Standing Rule: “Any USATT member who participates in any way (i.e., player, umpire or organizer) in an unsanctioned tournament shall be subject to disciplinary action.” Doru wants the Board to decide on this issue. Later, George will strongly question some current USATT Tournament Sanctioning Procedures—most notably one that will not allow a 4-star tournament in California and a similar one 3,000 miles away in New York to be played on the same weekend. Doru said he’d check on that.

Regarding the Elite and Cadet/Junior pipelines Chris Vadala is so interested in, Doru’s able to tell him that in both the Panasonic and China Opens Gao Jun reached the quarter’s in singles, and at the China Open the semi’s in doubles. In the World Junior Championships at the Brazil Open, the “Cadet boys finished 2<sup>nd</sup> in the team event and the cadet girls came 4<sup>th</sup> in the team event and 3<sup>rd</sup> in doubles....The junior girls won the bronze medal in [the] doubles event and Barbara Wei finished 3<sup>rd</sup> in the junior singles....The players and coaches will receive the respective bonus as per USATT HPP.”

Doru requests that next year the Board “approve the position of [a] Media/Marketing/PR Director.” Doru needs such a Director to find sponsorships, particularly for the major tournaments—the U.S. Open and Closed and Team’s. He’d also like the Board to consider NATT’s integrated software proposal that would answer many of the USATT’s organizational needs.

It's imperative, says Doru, that the USATT starts setting up State Associations. Among other things it would help develop our Elite Athlete pipeline. Jiing agreed that Guidelines and Bylaws have to be put in place as quickly as possible.

Doru's also waiting for Maasaki Tajima, Regional Committee Chair, to review the bids by those vying to set up a USATT Regional Training Center, and to get from them the necessary legal documents showing "lease or ownership of the building."

For the remainder of the evening meeting, the Board went into Executive Session.

## **Saturday, Sept. 24**

The morning session on Saturday (two Staff members, Tommy and Carolyn, returned) began with Robert summarizing the points Jim Collins was making in his book *Good To Great*. Associations such as ours, Robert felt, could profit by understanding Collins's analysis of how good companies became great. The process involved, with the aid of an exceptional leader, a build-up followed by a breakthrough. It demanded "disciplined people, disciplined thought, and disciplined action." Wherever an Association was going, it was necessary first to get "the right people on the bus, the wrong people off the bus, and the right people in the right seats." Focus is not on self but on the company, or Association. One for All, and All for One, you might say. If the bus wants to change direction down the road, fine with everyone because we all got on the bus and by this time stayed on it because of who else is on it. We're all self-motivated to work for the Association. The Who is initially more important than the Where To or How To Get There.

Progress begins by "facing the brutal facts" as to what at the moment is wrong with the company, or Association. Vigorous dialogue and debate is essential if all are to understand what objective is best. Even if all looks grim one must keep the faith. The truth has to be heard—*heard*, which is different from people having their say. And once heard must be relentlessly acted on—rev the bus, let's go—this if you really, passionately want to be better at what you do than anyone else. It's important to have a "To Do" list, but also important to have a "Not To Do" list and to be rigorous in enforcing it. Finally, one looks for flywheel momentum with the right technology. To sum up, success depends on all wanting to do excellence for its own sake.

Tim was one of those who found the book far more interesting than he thought it would be. For him personally its pages had life-affirming applications. He openly questioned, however, whether the book's principles would neatly apply to our USATT. Could Board members, could Tim, care *passionately* about governance? We didn't have lifetime jobs with this Association, had other interests. *Were* we One for All, and All for One? Could we be? Who, right or wrong, was on the bus? In the right or wrong seats? For how long? Still, as Robert would be the first to say, "Tremendous power exists in the fact of continued improvement and the delivery of results."

Preparatory to Larry Hodges' "Confront the Brutal Facts" approach, several Board members had comments, including Larry himself. Barney emphasized again that Progress is dependent on a setting, a place, a Training Center. Larry said, "Face it, if we really want to develop Olympic medallists, we need to set up a Training Center in Europe, where our players can train and compete in leagues with the best players." Dell

thought that Good to Great talk from the USOC was less about the Sport and more about Winning Medals. To win medals, we needed proven pipelines, not here-and-there pockets of would-be connections. George felt Leadership was very important, and that a Leader had to delegate responsibility. Robert said that when a Board member was on board, he/she was usually expected to give guidance and help raise money. Money—that's what the USATT needs; it needs partners to make deals. Agree the Board sets policy, but as for the Staff, what performance measurements have we for them?

Robert presented Board members with Table Tennis Membership statistics from 1994-2005, but I don't believe Board members knew all the sources for this data, or how reliable they were. Surely the USATT Membership data needs cleansing. Also, Tong commented on Robert's 1994-2005 SGMA Sports Participation Trends that he had entitled "Table Tennis is growing, USATT Membership is not." He disputed the validity of the statement, especially the first part that says "table tennis is growing" based on the statistics in the table. Tong pointed out that there was no correlation between the increase in figures in 2003 and 2004 and the growth of table tennis. In fact, the table showed that in 1990, 20.0 million played once a year compared to only 13.5 million in 2003 and 14.3 million in 2004. According to Robert's argument during this period, the table shows that table tennis was declining, but it is generally accepted also that USATT membership increased during the same period. This contradicts Robert's above heading for the table.

However, two conclusions that couldn't have come as a surprise were: (1) there's "a strong relationship between membership and tournament play" and (2) the average age for Male players is 40.5; for Female players 37.5. Last year, of the supposedly 6,957 USATT members, 2,921 (or 42%) allowed their membership to expire (and wouldn't rejoin?). Meanwhile, though many new members come in (ready or not) to try their hand at tournament play, the majority of them quickly get discouraged. To average them in with those that enjoy tournament play and so come up with an average length of participation of 2.5 years doesn't strike me as very meaningful. Anyway, the question for Robert and Larry is, How to stop the Membership attrition?

Larry addresses this question—offers a four-part Membership pipeline:

- (1) Showing the sport to the masses (**Show**).
- (2) Getting the masses to play at clubs (**Play**).
- (3) Getting club members to join USATT (**USATT**).
- (4) Getting USATT members to rejoin (**Rejoin**).

Larry points out that to SPUR Membership you have to start by thinking about (4) first. You have to stop the 30% yearly attrition of those who've joined. Playing in tournaments, getting a rating, and receiving the USA magazine hasn't traditionally been enough to keep many members. The key to keeping them, says Larry, is through Leagues. If we want to "Confront the Brutal Facts," we have to acknowledge that historically the Association has always focused on the tournament player when 95% of our potential members would play recreationally in leagues (like in Europe or in USA Tennis), not tournaments. What's badly needed is a full-time USATT League Director. This would encourage others to take the initiative, as did Shashin Shodan who went out and got sponsors and some prize money and established his 5-team California league.

In complementary fashion, our focus should also be on Juniors whose parents will want to give them coaching. If a junior comes into a club and sees lots of other juniors

there, especially playing in a league or being coached, he'll want to join too. Ashu points out that at the moment we have such a small junior pool—the more reason said Larry that ideally the USATT ought also to hire—we need money!—a Coaching & Junior Development Director, and a full-time Club and State Association Director. A network of reputable Clubs is key too. Barney says rightly that so many of the clubs are lousy. State Associations could have a Club Inspector to further their infrastructure. Coaches have to have places where bonding with their students can occur, where a pupil's league or tournament performance can be assessed, and coaches can make a continued good living. Juniors need clubs that their parents would encourage them to go to, where they can have serious pleasure, have fun and learn with their peers.

Regarding Show, Larry makes the point that sponsors and the masses are not now interested in tournaments—which seems to be the only product the USATT is prepared to offer them. However, Table Tennis could be marketable. Robert pictures a model U.S. Open with its Marketing exhibits and Hospitality tents. Sheri hopes to have ITTF marketing help and has arranged for Anders Thunstrom of the ITTF's marketing arm, TMS, to address the Board, provided that the Board also agrees to invite him. We would show him respect, yes? Robert and anyone else could pursue the question of, What's the value to the USATT if we partner with the ITTF/TMS? Would it be proper to ask for a Review in advance of Anders' proposed presentation?

Tong brought up the marketing acronym AIDA which stands Awareness, Interest, Desire and Action. Action is key. Only when people go through these stages to finally enter a sanctioned USATT tournament and purchase a membership would the Association benefit. Tong then went on to talk briefly about the four P's of marketing—Product, Place, Promotion and Price. The USATT needs to focus on all of these, but the only marketing function that involves an inflow of money is Price. Unless the Price is right and exceeds the cost of the other three P's, there can be no Profit which Tong refers to as the fifth P.

Alan Williams, Marketing Director for NATT, presented a proposed comprehensive software program, partially based on the Brazilian Association's software program, that would greatly expand USATT's membership capabilities. Robert, mindful that since NATT was a great organization the software would indeed be of high quality, wanted to hear more—particularly about content management, financial considerations. “NATT needs a business analyst,” he said. The Board needs to see a project plan. Hence a committee was established with Doru, Robert, and Khoa who'd follow up with conference calls.

Alan proposed a revenue sharing arrangement with the USATT in which NATT would introduce new League software, and run and promote the USATT League. This would create more Association intra-club play; more interaction between clubs and players interested in joining clubs; more league participation; and more USATT members. Larry will tell us that, though there are 143 active USATT leagues, the number of matches per month has plateaued—so both he and Alan feel Team play is necessary, and Doubles too. Like Robert, Richard Lee's NATT is interested in promoting college play. Currently, the National Collegiate Table Tennis Association uses Ratings Central, “a free, web-based service [that] allows anyone to enter match results and get a rating similar to the USATT rating.” NATT believes with its improved internet connections it can become webmaster for a USATT-oriented league site, can assume all necessary

administrative functions, including ratings for NCTTA players and others, and can execute a marketing plan that will bring organized play to non-USATT locations and consequently new members to the Association.

Said one Board member, It's real user friendly, huh? Yeah, said another, the response to this connective interface has gotta be, Hey, the Association is paying attention to *me!* Larry, pleased at the thought of being relieved as League Director, said it would be a big time-saver for him. Jiing said, "Grab it!"

Larry gave an upbeat Report on the *USA Table Tennis* magazine. The projected ad revenue for 2005 is the most ever. There were 613 copies of the Sept.-Oct. issue on 170 newsstands. The web site was holding steady with about "3500 hits ('page requests') per day."

Lily spoke of Juniors going to China, and of the need for more women players. They need more training sites where it's possible to practice with strong men players.

Doru said the USOC's get-a-medal-or-else position toward us can't be alleviated by simply bringing a world-class coach to the U.S. Even big-time coaches need to have a system behind them; they can't just turn up and win medals for you. The U.S. effort requires a full-time commitment—and money. Small cities have TV stations on which we might get exposure—that needs to be investigated. Jiing wanted to know if clubs developed, would we really need State Associations? We need them, said Doru, as USTTA branches of the same tree, to function like 50 countries working together. We need an Elite pipeline structure. That would be an entity we could present to get sponsorship. Whitney urged that volunteers be given guidelines, incentives, and it was suggested that we could pay State managers proportionate to their success.

Christian Lillieroos, the NCTTA Division Director Representative for the 16 Division Directors (our Willy is of course the NCTTA President), told us something about that Association, and how traditionally, with problems, it's sought to connect with the strictly amateur-minded NCAA. Christian's here addressing our Board because he hopes, with its 18-22-year-old student/athletes, the NCTTA could form a strong alliance with the USATT—serve as an integral part of a high school-college pipeline for us. At Texas Wesleyan, this year's host of the Clear Channel NCTTA National Championships, there are varsity-level scholarships to be had—currently there are two full scholarships and three partial ones. Publicity for the strong Wesleyan Team and its NCTTA competitive matches is good—with the Fort Worth *Star-Telegram* and local TV channels doing stories.

Christian emphasized that the NCTTA wants to be part of the USATT's High Performance Plan, wants to be recognized by the USTTA as having Collegiate Authority. (The ACU-I offers very poor conditions for tournament play.) Also (as in 1972 when the ACU-I first held its National Intercollegiate Table Tennis Tournament), NCTTA interest, with its 410 USATT members and increasing attention to Women's play, is high in representing the USATT at the World University Games.

Moving toward Adjournment, Doru and the Board noted a Referee Proposal by the Rules & Officials Committee, as well as Nominating & Election Committee

Proposals. It then took up Killerspin's request to be released from its contract with the USATT. Sheri distributed two emails from Robert stating this. Before the executive session was called to discuss this request, Sheri asked Robert if it was still his desire for Killerspin to be released from the contract and be answered in the affirmative. The Board then went into executive session. After coming out of executive session...

**MOTION I:** Move to release Killerspin, LLC, per Killerspin's request, from the remaining two years of the Sponsorship and Licensing Agreement as reinstated by the arbitrator in the Killerspin Arbitration.

**Proposed by:** AJ; seconded by WL.

**Passed:** 8-2.

**Opposed:** TB, GB. **Recused:** RB, BR, LY.

Because the USOC has proposed Election By-Law changes, and 2006 is an Election Year for the USATT, we need to be prepared. Consequently...

**MOTION II:** Move to:

- a. Delete the language currently contained in Chapter XVII, 1, of the USATT Bylaws, and replace that language with
  1. These Bylaws may be amended, repealed, or altered, in whole or in part, and new Bylaws may be adopted, by a majority of the Board's directors at any meeting duly called and at which a quorum is present;
- b. Delete the language currently contained in Chapter XVII, 2, of the USATT Bylaws;
- c. Delete the language currently contained in Chapter XVII, 4, of the USATT Bylaws;
- d. Re-designate the language currently contained in Chapter XVII, 3, of the USATT Bylaws as Chapter XVII, 2;
- e. Re-designate the language currently contained in Chapter XVII, 5, of the USATT Bylaws as Chapter XVII, 3.

**Proposed by:** TB; seconded by WP.

**Passed:** 9-0-4. **Abstained:** JW, RB, BR, WL.

**MOTION III:** Move to amend Chapter XVII, 1, of the USATT Bylaws, as amended in the above motion, to the following:

1. These Bylaws may be amended, repealed, or altered, in whole or in part, and new Bylaws may be adopted, by the affirmative vote of nine members of the Board at any meeting duly called and at which a quorum is present;

**Proposed by:** AJ; seconded by KN.

**Passed:** 13-0.

**MOTION IV:** Move to delete Standing Rule #1 of the Sanctioning Committee: “Any USATT member who participates in any way (i.e., player, umpire, or organizer) in an unsanctioned tournament shall be subject to disciplinary action.” Re-designate the remaining rules accordingly.

**Proposed by:** BR; seconded by RB.

**Passed:** 13-0.

Adjournment.

**Submitted by USATT Secretary Tim Boggan (Oct. 22, 2005)**