

Butterfly® NEWS

09 2007

Successful Start of the season with Timo Boll

Borussia Duesseldorf started the new season in the German Table Tennis League (DTTL) with a spectacular event. 4200 spectators came to the home premier of the Record Champion with newcomer Timo Boll. A new record in the over 40 year old history of the League!

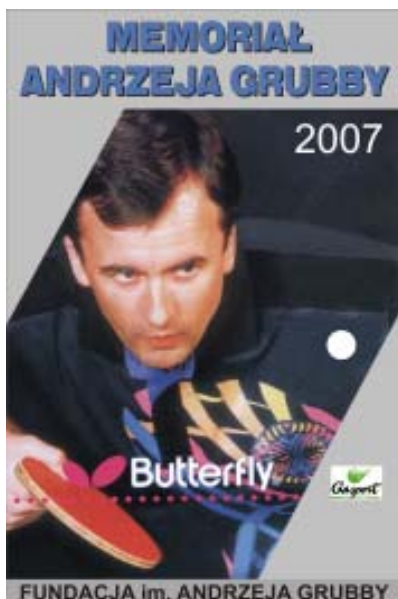
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Memorial Andrzej Grubba

He was not only a great personality in the table tennis world: Andrzej Grubba. For more than two decades he was more than a sign-board for Butterfly. The „Gentleman“ from Poland, who died unexpectedly two years ago, was an idol through and through - especially for the youngsters. Adam Giersz, his Polish Ex-National Coach and nowadays chairman of Butterfly partner Gasport says: Andrzej was a highly respected world class player. This year we have started a new tournament for school children in his honour. The „Andrzej Grubba Memorial Tournament“ took place in 11 Polish Regions with more than 3000 school children. Giersz: „The success proves us right. The tournament is going to be a set fixture on the table tennis calendar with the motto „Play like Grubba“, to motivate children for our sport.



„Werder Bremen“ now also with Butterfly



What is an absolute necessity for the football Bundesliga players could now also be realized by the table tennis department in cooperation with Butterfly. All teams will appear in the same outfit during the 2007/2008 season. Butterfly has produced a shirt exclusively for Werder Bremen in the colours of Werder – this is unique, not only in the 1. Table Tennis Bundesliga. The junior stars of Werder will play in the new shirts in all series matches and championships.

5. October - 07. October 2007
World Team Cup, Magdeburg

17. October - 21. October 2007
Pro Tour: Eurosib Russian Open, St. Petersburg

24. October - 28. October 2007
Pro Tour: Liebherr Austrian Open, Wels

Our Photo-Partners



Manfred Schillings

Impressum:
Editor + Kontakt
Yuki Kamizuru, 02841/90532-0

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Gao Jun: Success at the Pan American Games 2007

Gao Jun returned home with two Gold Medals from the Pan American Games. In the singles final she beat the American Wu Xue (DOM) 11-6, 11-8, 11-7, 6-11, 9-11, 11-5. In the Team Final she beat together with the American Team the Canadian Team 3-0. Her material: Matsushita Pro, Challenger Attack

Advertising for Table Tennis

Even celebrities pick up a table tennis bat. This time Bruce Darnell, TV star as Catwalk – Trainer of „Germany's next Top – Model“, tried his luck. Darnell took a Butterfly Mini Bat at the opening of the season for Eintracht Frankfurt in the Commerzbank Arena and gave several hundred autographs afterwards (see picture). Result: brilliant advertising for table tennis in front of more than 10000 spectators.



Great demand for Butterfly – Camp 2008

The 2nd Butterfly summer camp was a great success. Nearly 40 participants from top players to senior and junior players were training one week at the sports school in Frankfurt. Two coaches took care that nobody was bored with basic, competition and material training as well as individual training with a robot. Because of the great demand the date for the next summer camp 2008 was set already:

5th to 13th of July 2008

Presentation of picture series, analyses and help for practical training – Table Tennis 2

The LuNo publisher presents in its books „Bildreihen, Analysen und Praxishilfen – Tischtennis“ (Picture series, analysis and help for practical training – table tennis) in irregular succession practical contributions for ambitious and varied table tennis training. The main content are excellent picture series from the Japanese magazine „THE TABLE TENNIS REPORT“ which is published by the mother house of Tamasu Butterfly Europe in Moers, and the contributions deal with precise technical and tactical analysis with easily transferable training recommendations.

In the second book you find a detailed analysis of the special stroke „Chiquita“ for advanced players. Different ways of execution and links with other techniques are still demonstrated by Petr Korbel.

In the second part we look at the „Chiquita“ flip version. Using this technique makes it very difficult for the opponent to anticipate the next ball. Furthermore there are three answers to a short serve, where the main stress lies on tricks. Here the practical part is a bit short, because there are not many exercises to introduce the Chiquita stroke.

Orders to: LuNO – Verlag und Marketing, Johan-Baptist-Strasse 23, 53894 Metternich
T.:+49(02443)903816, Fax:+49(02443)903824

Price: 4,00 Euro



09 2007

Timo Bolls Column

Finally competitions again and excitement for the debut for Borussia Duesseldorf

Hello, dear fans and readers!

Some interesting weeks are lying behind me. August is traditionally the month where the new season starts, but this year was special for me from several points of view: On the one hand I could finally start playing competitions again after a break of nearly three month since the WC in Zagreb and on the other hand it was the beginning of a new phase in my life because of my first appearances for my new club Borussia Duesseldorf. Conclusively I can say that I am very satisfied with the last months.

Naturally the most important thing for me was to finally start playing again. After such a long break you start getting fidgety if you are only training and don't play any competitions. The content of the preparation for the season with the training at Borussia and the training camp with my colleagues from the National Team in Austria was well selected as we could see after the first matches.

In the German Table Tennis League with Duesseldorf I had a few problems at the beginning of the first match against TTC Fulda Maberzell against Jan Ove Waldner but after the victory against this icon it went a lot better against Feng Zhe. How important match training is for me became definitely obvious at the Chinese Taipeh Open. During the first matches I could feel that my control still wasn't good enough, but I fought my way into the tournament and was getting better from match to match. In the final against Vladimir

ITTF World Ranking, Mens (08/2007)



1	MA Lin CHN	16	KREANGA Kalinikos GRE
2	WANG Liqin CHN	17	GAO Ning SIN
3	WANG Hao CHN	18	CHEN Weixing AUT
4	BOLL Timo GER	19	PRIMORAC Zoran CRO
5	SAMSONOV Vladimir BLR	20	KAN Yo JPN
6	OH Sang Eun KOR	21	MAZE Michael DEN
7	MA Long CHN	22	KONG Linghui CHN
8	Chen Qi CHN	23	LEE Jung Woo KOR
9	RYU Seung Min KOR	24	KORBEL Petr CZE
10	HAO Shuai CHN	25	SMIRNOV Alexei RUS
11	HOU Yingchao CHN	26	KO Lai Chak HKG
12	SCHLAGER Werner AUT	27	PERSSON Jorgen SWE
13	JOO Se Hyuk KOR	28	CHIANG Peng-Lung TPE
14	LI Ching HKG	29	CRISAN Adrian ROU
15	CHUAN Chih-Yuan TPE	30	OVTCHAROV Dimitrij GER

ITTF World Ranking, Women (08/2007)



1	ZHANG Yining CHN	16	Li Jiao NED
2	WANG Nan CHN	17	SUN Bei Bei SIN
3	GUO Yue CHN	18	HIRANO Sayaka JPN
4	GUO Yan CHN	19	CAO Zhen CHN
5	LI Xiaoxia CHN	20	FUKUOKA Haruna JPN
6	TIE Yana HKG	21	WU Jiaduo GER
7	JIANG Huajun HKG	22	SHEN Yanfei PRK
8	Li Jia Wei SIN	23	KANAZAWA Saki JPN
9	WANG Yue Gu SIN	24	WANG Chen USA
10	KIM Kyung Ah KOR	25	ZHANG Rui HKG
11	NIU Jianfeng CHN	26	PARK Mi Young KOR
12	FUKUHARA Ai JAP	26	LAU Sui Fei HKG
13	LIN Ling HKG	28	DING Ning CHN
14	LIU Jia AUT	29	TAN MONFARDINI Wenling ITA
15	GAO Jun USA	30	PENG Luyang CHN

(Butterfly-players are marked!)

Samsonov it wasn't quite enough for winning the title but I can live well with the Silver medal from the first tournament of the season especially after the long break. Not being in top form at such an early stage is from my point of view quite normal. It was very important to me to have fun on my return to the Pro Tour.



The first weeks at Borussia Duesseldorf were also good fun. My new club is working very professionally and practically nothing is left to coincidence, which is very pleasant for us players. The whole surroundings are completely different to the ones in my former club TTV Goennern. The interest of the fans and the media in our team far beyond the city boundaries is enormous. The number of autograph hunters seemed nearly endless during two test matches and there was a great demand for press interviews. Sometimes in between the management had to step in because we could hardly practice any more.

Seen altogether all the fuss we are creating at Borussia is very positive. The club and we as a team have the target not only to win the title but also present table tennis as an attractive sport for spectators and the media. For the match against Fulda the expectations were very high: A brilliant show with star comedian Matze Knop and the popular DSDS singer Francisca Urio turned this game into an event with a breathtaking atmosphere for the 4200 spectators (a new spectator record). When Francisca Urio sang the National Anthem I got goose pimples despite all the concentration on the following matches. I think that more clubs in table tennis should go this way so that our sport together with the new TTL Magazine on TV, which from my point of view is a big chance, gets a modern image with more pep.

For me personally the match in Duesseldorf was not only because of all the surrounding conditions so special: After twelve years in Goennern where I was very happy you feel a bit funny before your first match for a different club. I think that is perfectly normal and you don't need to have a bad conscience because of that.

Even though, I was a lot more nervous in the changing room than during past years. I knew the expectations and had my thoughts that it would not be very pleasant after all the brilliant results for Goennern during the past years to start your first match with Borussia with a loss.

But it all went well despite my wobbly knees and the frenetically welcome by Duesseldorf's fans in the hall only helped me to identify myself sooner with Borussia.

After the Pro Tour tournaments in Taiwan and afterwards in China my next tasks are with Borussia in September. We have three group matches in the Champions League until the end of the month. With our team we don't belong to the top favourites but we have outsider chances. In 2005 and 2006 I have experienced the possibilities arising from such a starting position with the Champion League victories in Goennern.

A good result in the Champions League is the top target for Borussia. We are definitely going for the title in the German League and the Cup. I think we can't shake off being the favourite in both competitions but we must be very concentrated on each game so that we don't get any bad surprises. I am really hot to win the German League because I never managed to win this title and I hope that I can achieve this with Borussia.

Bye for now

Yours



Timo's own Homepage:
<http://www.timo-boll.de>

 **Butterfly**
NEWS®

09 2007

Toshio Tasaki: Forehand Smash

The forehand smash is the „King-stroke“ in table tennis. The one, who doesn't like it, doesn't like anything in table tennis says Werner Schlager in Tips & Tricks about the forehand smash in this Butterfly News Issue. Indeed the forehand smash is the hardest and fastest stroke. Especially when it is executed with the forehand it demonstrates the whole fascination of the table tennis sport: extreme speed, athleticism and a high risk. The one, who can smash hard and with control, enjoys a lot of respect from his team mates and opponents. Naturally the topspin has taken over as the main attacking stroke but in many situations you can't do without the smash. Against high balls, too high backspin balls too slow topspins and flips but also as a risky weapon against fast spins or counter balls you must and can smash. If you manage the complex movement of a forehand smash you have reached a remarkable level from the technical point of view in table tennis already. Looking at the lower leagues you can see most technical mistakes especially with the forehand smash – mainly because of a deficit in physical ability and coordination.

The Japanese top player Toshio Tasaki (best world ranking placement: no.22) demonstrates in this picture series the forehand smash from the backhand side against a low counter hit or spin ball. The height of the approaching ball plays an important role for the smash, because the player has to adjust his stroke to the height where he wants to hit the ball. The movement of the stroke is similar with low (a few centimetres above the net) and half high (shoulder – to head height) approaching balls. The movement changes drastically against very high defensive balls. We will take a look at that in the next Butterfly News.

Picture 1-3 show the preparation of the movement. From the basic backhand position Toshio initiates the movement with an explosive take off from the right foot to a parallel jump with both legs so that he gets to the sideways position. While jumping he makes a half twist to get from the frontal backhand position (in view of the base line of the table) to a sideways position. This lightning fast jump is the presupposition for the success of the stroke. The smash is not only played against relatively slow pushes but also against faster rallies like a counter or spin ball. Therefore the fast jump is extremely important. The same accounts for forehand loops from the backhand side. While jumping round Toshio takes the left shoulder and left hip forwards.



07 Stars under the magnifier

He is landing on the right back leg to take the body weight (**picture 2**). The left front foot is not on the ground yet. By doing this he shifts his body weight to the back leg. At the same time he twists his hips and upper body backwards (**picture 3**) and lowers his body weight further by bending his knee. Through this he creates even more pressure on his back right leg and achieves the optimal tension in the muscles of his upper body, especially the stomach and back muscles which produce the rotation of the upper body at the hip. In the meantime Toshio has moved his bat backwards and down.



Pictures 4, 5 show the main phase of the stroke. From the low down position Toshio is now clearly straightening his body. The body weight is still on his back foot (**picture 4**). Then he twists round with his upper body (**Picture 5**). Simultaneously the body weight is moved forward to the point of contact with the ball. He jumps forward and his feet are barely touching the ground. The stroke arm moves very fast from back and down towards the point of contact with the ball, where it is nearly stretched (but not completely). The bat angle is more or less closed depending on the approaching ball.

Pictures 6, 7 show the finish of the movement and show clearly how much power and speed has been used during the smash. A look at his legs tells us how much the body weight has been shifted. Like in the javelin Toshio has caught his whole body weight by a jump on to the left leg (**picture 6**). This impulse of an explosive shift of body weight from the back to the forward leg is of great importance for the power of the stroke. Obviously the speed of the arm movement and the use of the wrist (if applied) also play an important role but without the legs the smash is never really hard. A third factor becomes clear on **picture 7**: the rotation of the upper body. It is worth while to compare **picture 3** with **picture 7**. The backwards orientated upper body at the beginning of the movement is speedily rotated forwards towards the ball. This rotational movement is supported by the semi-circle like movement of the stroke arm.

The drawing from a sideways perspective stresses again the three most important components of the forehand smash, which have all got to be coordinated at the moment when making contact with the ball and reach their maximum concerning speed:

1. extreme shifting of body weight from the back to the front leg
2. simultaneous rotation of the upper body at the hip
3. extremely long semi-circle movement of the stroke arm



09 Stars under the magnifier

On **pictures F1 and F2** Toshio shows us **typical mistakes**. Both pictures show the end of the smash. Especially at the end of a technical stroke movement you can see the main mistakes easily.

On **picture F1** we see three main mistakes:

- a nearly parallel position of the legs
- a stroke movement, which ends above the head
- a hardly bent left knee

That indicates

- that, the player hasn't shifted his body weight not at all or only very little,
- that, the speed of the stroke arm was too low and the distance of the stroke was too short and
- that, the stroke movement wasn't directed forwards but to the side.

On **picture F2** it is clear

- that the player nearly without rotation of the upper body
- that the timing was wrong at the moment of contact with the ball, because the body weight is not on the left forward foot
- that like in F1 the bat is in height of the head

From that you can conclude that the player knows how to smash but can't coordinate the movement at the moment of making contact with the ball (timing). Altogether the forward impulse is not big enough. This becomes clear by looking at the back leg, which is still on the ground and the front one is hardly bent.



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Sriver L HT	1.9 / 2.1 / max	red and black
Sriver G2 HT	1.9 / 2.1 / max	red and black

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11 Products of the month



SRIVER G2 HT

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Fresh gluing is not necessary. SRIVER G2 HT fulfils all the variations requirements for the modern day attacking player, speed, spin and excellent control.

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World Champion Werner Schlager – Part 6: Smash

In 2003 Werner Schlager became sensationally World Champion in the Men Singles in Paris. Not all experts thought this possible. The rise of the Austrian to the top of the world was not easy. With courage, strength and endurance the right handed player managed the stony way to the top. Werner Schlager lives and lived table tennis like nobody else. His professional attitude towards sport is exemplary. For Butterfly the 34 year old is an important counsellor concerning the development of products. In his book: „Matchball – Dreams and Triumphs“, which was published last year, he describes his career, his successes and disappointments, his opinions about table tennis and his very personal quite philosophical thoughts about life. A very good book, not only for table tennis players. In the new Butterfly series „Tips & Tricks from the World champion“ he answers many questions concerning all areas of competition and training: technique, tactic, psychology, endurance, organisation of training, competition, player development and culture, material, rules, coaches. Barely practical issues. The Butterfly team and Werner Schlager wish you, dear reader, good entertainment and joy. If you have further questions about a topic, send us a mail. Previous articles: push, counter hit, forehand - topspin, Backhand-topspin, Flip



It doesn't matter if you are just a hobby player or playing for a club mastering the smash is a great art. „Wow, he can smash hard!“ that is the expression which we hear very often and shows all the admiration for this technique. What is so fascinating about a smash?

Obviously it is the brutality, which adds speed to the smash. Speed again is the reason for its efficiency.

The topspin as a point winning stroke in modern attacking table tennis has made the smash less important. Nevertheless the backhand and forehand smash belongs to the basic techniques of each top player. In which game situations do you use the smash?

In situations where I don't have time to play a topspin. It is an „emergency“ stroke. It is the classical answer to very high or short balls.

According to the definition the ball is hit at the centre when we are smashing. In opposite to the topspin the ball does not have any forward rotation. Is a smash in comparison to a topspin more risky because of that?

Definitely. The lack of stabilizing rotation causes automatically a lack of control.

What is a so called „smashspin“, a mix of a topspin and a smash, or is this technique only an idea of some very clever table tennis theoreticians?

Right the opposite. Practically you gain a reasonable mix of efficiency (speed) and control (rotation) with the smashspin.

When smashing with the backhand you hear the term „whip“ very often. Is that a hint towards the extreme use of the wrist while smashing with the backhand?

That is well possible. The more you use the wrist the more difficult it is to control the ball.

When are you using the backhand smash, which does not play such an important role in comparison to the forehand smash?

Only when the ball is played unusually high and/or short to my backhand.

13 Tips and Tricks

Most books about the techniques point out that the forehand smash is played without wrist movement. How do you smash with your forehand?

The shorter the ball the more I use the wrist, because of control.

When you play against backspin defence – like for example against the Korean Joo Se Hook in the WC Final 2003 - when do you decide to smash the ball?

When a ball is short and/or high enough to smash it safely.

A game situation which is especially fascinating for table tennis fans is the forehand smash on high balls. There you can see very different points where the ball is actually smashed. Mainly the ball is hit at the highest point but sometimes it is also hit very early when the ball is still going up or very late, when the ball is falling down. What is the moment of contact with the ball depending on?

The moment of contact is always a decision on efficiency and control. The earlier I take the ball, the less control I have. You have most control if you take the ball at the highest point. You should not hit the ball later than that because efficiency and control are declining. In my experience personal preferences play an important role.

The forehand smash, especially on high balls, is often described as the most athletic stroke in table tennis. Some players (I think you too) jump up in the air similar to javelin where they combine a take off technique with the stroke. What is so difficult about the forehand smash?

You are using your whole body during the stroke, which makes coordination accordingly difficult. The jump makes the coordination of the stroke even more difficult, what should be avoided. The „jump stroke“ is only used to hit the ball at the highest point. That means: the „jump stroke“ is very attractive but in my eyes only an emergency solution.

Do you like the game situation high ball defence against a smash? With some players you get the impression they are looking forward to hit against the defender, with others it looks like that they are afraid to miss the ball.

I am always looking forward to smash the ball. Some players have little experience with smashing the ball. Probably those, who have written „fear“ all over their face.

Smashing a high ball is often compared to shooting a penalty in football. The one, who misses a high ball, has missed a penalty. This is a very annoying ball, which is mentally difficult to swallow. Such missed penalties were often the reason that a whole match could be turned round. Did you ever experience that or did you watch that happen in a very important match?

Naturally I have missed „penalties“ too and watched some colleagues doing it. But you shouldn't become insecure because of that.

How do you deal with a missed ball?

No different than with other mistakes. Analyse it, find a solution, finished.

Which technical/tactical mistakes can often be seen while smashing?

Impatience.

Is there one player, who smashes hardest and what are his qualities?

Oh Sang Eun has the best smash from my point of view. A lot of efficiency and control.

Smashing is often neglected in new-beginners training, sometimes even ignored. How and how often do you train the smash? Are there special exercises?

During training matches you always get the chance to smash. Thanks to my experience I don't need any extra training for that.

Interview with Maurizio Errigo, Italy

„Success is not a coincidence“



He is not even 40 years old, precisely 38, but Maurizio Errigo is one of the most successful table tennis coaches of Italy. In 1994 he became head coach of a regional centre of excellence of the Italian Table Tennis Association being only 25 years old and worked his way up step by step. From 1996 until 2000 he was the technical director of the junior teams and head coach of the boys' team. From 2000 until 2005 he took over the National Women Team and won the European Title at the Italian ski resort Courmayeur. Since 2005 the man from Florence is concentrating on his home club Sterigarda T.T. Castel Goffredo, with whom he won the women Champions League in 2006 and 2007.

Last year Butterfly Europe founded the Italian company „Butterfly Italy“ whose director is Maurizio Errigo. For years he and Butterfly have been working closely together. Now the brand Butterfly is supposed to be promoted further by this young professional team in Italy.

Maurizio, you are one of the most successful coaches in Italy. In 2003 you won the European Championship with the Women Team. In 2006 and 2007 the titles in the Women Champions League for Clubs followed. Tell our readers more about your career as a coach in Italy (motivation, start, steps, clubs and players).

I started my career as a coach in 1993 when I was invited to take part in an important project of the Italian Table Tennis Association under the chairmanship of Stefano Bosi, to establish a project for the top level table tennis in Italy. During that period, we had an Olympic Centre in Fiuggi and 13 regional centres. After working for one year at a regional centre I was asked to join the coaches of the Italian National Teams in Fiuggi. Deniso was the head coach in Fiuggi and I am grateful to him that I was allowed to work by his side and gain international experience. Again one year later I was in charge of the

Italian Cadet and Junior Teams and I became head coach for the U21 Team and assistant coach for the Men Team. In 2000 I became Head Coach for the Women National Team until July 2005. After the Olympic Games in Athens 2004, I accepted the offer to be Technical Director for the Club Sterilgarda T.T Castel Goffredo and to continue with Women National Team at the same time, but at the end of that season some tricky situations arose so that I decided to work only for the club.

Why did you become coach and why did you focus on woman table tennis?

I always wanted to be an Italian National Coach and achieve results which we never had before. The answer to the second part of your question is that I worked equally much with women and men during my career. At first it was the men and then especially from 2000 – 2005 the women and since three years I am head coach of the men in my club. Of course I achieved my greatest results with the women but for me the most prestigious success was the Bronze Medal with the Italian Junior Team at the European Junior Championships in 1997. No Italian Junior Team before managed to get so far. That is a wonderful memory for me.

What's your motivation and your philosophy as coach?

In the beginning motivation comes from an idea. Very often coaches look for motivation in their players but the coach has to be the first one to be motivated, he is a leader and sets an example for his player. When I started as a coach my motivation and my idea was to put on the National shirt as a coach. When I succeeded in that my next motivation was to achieve best possible results. I managed to win altogether 11 medals at European Junior Championships from 1997 - 2000, more than anybody before me. The same applies for the Italian National Woman Team with the European Title in 2003 and the two Champion League victories with the women of my club. To be the best was my motivation when I started my project with the Italian Women National Team in 2000. During the last two years I was strongly motivated to become a European Champion Coach also in the Women Champions League after achieving it with Italian National Team. I have always tried to achieve the best results. There is no other option.

...and your philosophy

My philosophy as a coach is that table tennis in the last 15-20 years has really developed: everybody is trying to organize table tennis better and more professional. Table tennis is one of the most popular sports in the world and there is no longer room for empirical or unprepared training sessions. Every session and every exercise has to be planned. You must be very professional if you want to get to the top. That is my first priority in my job as well as in my life. Winning matches at high level is always very difficult, because little details decide over victory and defeat. It means that nothing in a preparation or in a practice session must be at random but everything must be thought through and studied thoroughly. One point can be deciding and the more you take care of details during your practice sessions the higher your chance of winning the deciding point will be. As an important Butterfly advertisement says 'Success is not a product of coincidence'.

Have you been a good player?

I have never played professionally but I was ranked between 15 and 20 in the Italian ranking at my best time. I immediately stopped to play when I started my career as a National Team Coach.

Can you describe the situation in Italian top table tennis for men and women?

As results and numbers confirm the Italian women have achieved important successes on International level during the last years. When I started in 2000 with the Women National Team, not many other people except me and my team believed that our team could achieve such important results in international table tennis; now, the most important issue after being European Champion and having reached other important results, is to maintain these, to improve them and to build up something again for the future. Regarding the men important time has been lost, after Head Coach Patrizio Deniso stopped, who lead the Italian Team to some really incredible successes like a Bronze Medal at the World Championships 2000, and also consequently to the absence of our top players from international events. As I was saying at the beginning of our interview, after the 90's when our Association established that important project which raised all our table tennis (young players, international results, coaches); I think that especially and particularly in countries like Italy where

we do not have so much culture or tradition in table tennis and numbers of players like Germany or France, if you want to compete with the best countries the only way is to have a perfect strategy, programmes and organization to raise your level up to the standard of the countries which are normally better than us.

How many clubs are working professionally, how many players are professional?

Not all Clubs playing in the First Italian League are professional Clubs working everyday in proper sports halls with professional coaches and players and the situation is worse for women. There are not more than 12 professional women.

If my information is right, there aren't so many active players in Italy: about 10.000. What is the Italian Federation doing to increase the number of players?

My personal opinion is that an association must have principally two separate targets:

The top level and the development of sports to increase the numbers of players. Not always are these two goals connected: I remember my press conference in Courmayeur in 2003, a few minutes after winning the Gold Medal in the Women Team Event, when a famous German journalist asked me if after this big success table tennis in Italy would be increasing, I immediately answered him that I did not think so and unfortunately I was right.

Normally, we think that achieving important international results increases the number of players in every sport but all this really only happens in already well-known and traditional sports. Our success clashed with the great international Tomba successes and everybody in Italy wanted to ski. But, when there is a big gap between the top level and the basis of a sport, international results do not change concrete 'basic problems' (like sports halls, players, coaches, etc)

What about the public interest in table tennis: sports reviews, journals, TV?

Having reached important results like European titles with the national team and the club, and having a full-team in Athens 2004, we were regarded by mass-media.

Maurizio, let's talk about Butterfly. Since when are you working for Butterfly and in which function?

I am grateful to Butterfly, in this case especially to Mr. Imamura, who has listened to me, almost since the beginning of my international career as a coach and considered my suggestions regarding the support of a few young Italian players who had the chance to become international players. After my international successes as coach I became Butterfly Sports Director in Italy.

In strong cooperation with Butterfly you have started the Butterfly Project „Italia“ in 2006. What does it mean in detail and what are your targets? What did you achieve up to now?

Mr. Kamizuru has all the merit for this project. I could only offer my experience and knowledge of Italian table tennis to Butterfly. So we created the project. Butterfly is the most important brand in table tennis all around the world but in Italy they were not presented so much during the last years. The most important players in Italy were Butterfly players (Stefanova, Negrisoni, Piacentini...) for many years. It was necessary to create something which was really a branch of Butterfly Europe; so, Butterfly Italia, Official and Authorised Butterfly Dealer was born. Mr. Kamizuru asked me to be the Managing Director of Butterfly Italia, to have a reliable person working together with him. Our project has been and will be successful in the future. I think that Butterfly is definitely now more present in Italy.

Please finish the following sentences (and don't take it too seriously)

The one, who can smash, **has an advantage.**

The one, who misses a smash, **is lost for words on top of it.**

The one, who doesn't like smashing, **doesn't like anything.**

The one, who manages a brilliant smash, **jumps up and down for joy.**

I learnt the forehand smash... **with a lot of effort.**

I learnt the backhand smash... **never properly.**

New spectator record

Borussia Düsseldorf and Boll successfully on a new way



Borussia Düsseldorf has started with a „bang“ in the new German Table Tennis League (DTTL). The premier of its new „Dream Team“ with European Champion Timo Boll attracted the impressive number of 4200 spectators to the Butterfly Club for a match against TTC Fulda Maberzell and set a new record in the history of the 40 year old league.

That meant an improvement of their own record for the German Record Champion – 4100 spectators came to Düsseldorf to see Boll and the former Champion League Winner TTV Gonnern during autumn 2005 – a confirmation of the new course. Borussia wants to make the table tennis sport more interesting by modern presentation and present the matches like events in combination with more aggressive public relation work to attract new spectators.

The first attempt was a full success: For the match against Fulda where Düsseldorf rented the bigger Burg-Wächter-Castello-Hall just outside of town, manager Andreas Preuss and his companions hired the top comedian Matze Knop and the popular pop singer Francisca Urió. Both stars inspired the audience which included numerous curious prominent guests a long time before the first ball was served as well as during match breaks. Urió caused goose pimples for the spectators with her very emotional version of the German National Anthem.

After the number 4 of the WRL Boll had the perfect debut in the Düsseldorf shirt after 12 years in Gonnern („I was very nervous, despite my experience this match was not a usual one“) and the 6:1 success resulted in many happy faces. Also from the sporting point of view, Andreas Preuss looked towards the future despite all the satisfaction ready for the next event. „We are proud. We have set new standards with our team and our new concept of presentation. The atmosphere was phenomenal. We will swallow that first but then our target will be to repeat such an event, to improve it and set a standard for table tennis in Düsseldorf. I can imagine that we can mobilize even more fans for deciding matches in the League and definitely even more in the Champions League and still improve the atmosphere“ says Preuss.

Boll too, who plays together in a trio with the Czech Petr Korbel and the Japanese top talent Jun Mizutani was impressed by the efforts of his new club: „That was an enormous show with a brilliant audience. If we want to achieve more in table tennis in the future that is surely the right way to go.“

