

George Latterman 14/09/2013 TableTennis11

I've had extensive use of Palio Thor's and Xiom Vega China and have reviewed both of them. They both are excellent rubbers. I'm here now to tell you that Xiom Tau I is even better.

Having said that, I'm not saying there is nothing negative about this rubber. Xiom Tau is NOT a high control rubber and I also find it to be quite sensitive to incoming spin. Choppers and allrounders please stay away from Tau. This is a rubber that is meant for pure forehand offensiveness. Tau is fast, really fast. The first 48 hours it was Tenergy 64 fast. After that point it plateaus at something a little faster than Tenergy 05.

The topsheet is a little tackier than Vega China. I would say about as tacky as H3 Neo topsheet. It's capable of lifting the ball for at least 1 second where Vega China could lift it about half a second.

Serves are excellent. It's really very good at being able to provide dead ball serves that look like backspin. Of course serves can be really spinny also. What I'm trying to say is that serving offers a ton of variability with slight alterations.

Smashes are great for a Chinese rubber but of course Euro/Japan rubbers are better at it.

Drives to me are interesting. I find flat driving a little difficult to keep consistent. However, simply add a little spin to your driving and the effect is superb.

Looping backspin is fantastic. Even against decent backspin, with a fast enough arm motion I'm able to loop it consistently and can keep it low with tons of spin that shoots forwards.

Counter-looping is unparalleled. Here is it's specialty (and the reason most people are looking for Chinese style tensors). Xiom Tau is the best counterlooping Chinese style rubber ever produced as of the time of this writing. It is equal to a speedglued H3 Neo Provincial/National and you don't have to reglue it all the time. I can't even imagine how amazing it would play speed glued for those who do that. While counterlooping, despite the extremely hard sponge (probably at least 42 degrees DHS scale), when engaged there is this almost "sinking" feeling to it that feels so good.

Side-spin looping with Tau is perfect. When I used Palio Thor's I really enjoyed it's tremendous side spin and I was a little disappointed when Vega China seemed to have lost that. Xiom Tau has brought it back. The trajectory it provides is wicked and very difficult for your opponent to predict.

Blocking was pretty good. Again, it is sensitive to spin but that sinking feeling with the sponge comes into play during blocks which seems to help provide a little more quality to them. Active blocking works best, so make sure to have a more forward motion when blocking with Tau.

In a nutshell, Xiom Tau I is H3 Neo Provincial/National speedglued with just as much spin and at least as much speed. I would even recommend it above H3 because the sheets are more consistent and you don't have to constantly speed glue.

Xiom Tau is an excellent sequel to tacky tensors.

Palio Thor's is the alpha, Xiom Vega China is the improved beta, and Xiom Tau is the final product.

Each iteration has improved and seems to have built off from the last. I hope Tau II and Tau III do not screw up the formula. I don't think they will but only time will tell.