

**44th German Open 2009 in Bremen**

**Timo Boll boosts his self confidence in Bremen on the way to Yokohama**



The target is clear: Timo Boll wants to win a medal for the first time at the Single World Championships which start on the 28th of April in Yokohama. A month before the start of the global Championships the Butterfly star used the chance at the 44th German Open at the end of March to boost his self confidence on the long way to Japan by

winning the singles and the doubles event in Bremen at the last Pro Tour event before the WC 2009.

**The Newsletter in a new outfit!**

Dear ladies and gentlemen,  
Dear table tennis friends!  
After the change in our internet pages the Newsletter is also adjusted accordingly. We hope you enjoy our „new“ pages!

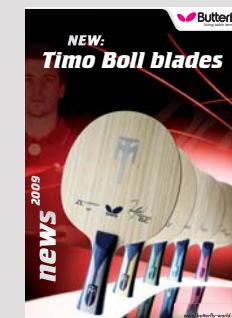
Best wishes  
Your Butterfly News publisher

**Important notice!**

Because of the imminent Table Tennis World Championships in Yokohama/Japan our next issue will not be published before the 6<sup>th</sup> of May 2009.

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## 44th German Open 2009 in Bremen

### **Timo Boll boosts his self confidence in Bremen on the way to Yokohama**



**Timo Boll**

The fourth win of the title after 2004 (Leipzig), 2006 (Bayreuth) and 2008 (Berlin) was the expected victory of the favourite. Boll's appearances have been a pure demonstration of strength for the last six months. Since the end of September 2008 the second place at the World Cup in Liege, third place at the Qatar Open and the quarterfinals in Denmark have been the "worst" results of the German superstar who can present three European titles, victories at the European Top 12, the European Super Cup, the Qatar Open, the Austrian Open, the Polish Open and twice the German Open on his list during the last five months.



**Jun Mizutani**

in the semi final when the super technician Boll and Jun Mizutani (Japan) played long rallies from half distance on the highest level. Whereas Boll talked about the most difficult and hardest match of the tournament denied Mizutani all the praise after the 4:1 defeat: "The result was very clear. Timo is a lot better than I." Timo Boll answered the question of a journalist if anybody in Europe is able to beat him at the moment with a smile: "It is not easy but I think that I still can be beaten. But I am in absolute top form at the moment and am going to the WC in Yokohama with a lot of self confidence."

How impressively Boll dominated his opponents is expressed by his 4:0 victory in the final against his all time rival Vladimir Samsonov. Boll who played without mistakes expected more opposition of the White Russian: "I never thought that it would go so quickly." The best match for the spectators in the AWD-Dome took place between two "Butterflies"

Boll couldn't be stopped in Bremen in the singles and in the doubles (with Christian Süss) but Mizutani followed the European Champion closely with Bronze in the singles and Silver in the doubles with his Butterfly partner Saya Kishikawa. Altogether the Tamasu partners won seven medals at the German Open 2009. The White Russian Viktoria Pavlovich

won Silver in the women single, the Japanese Hiroko Fujii got Bronze in the women's doubles and Ruwen Filius climbed to the top of the podium in the U 21 competition. Not many players expected the defending artist Pavlovich to reach the finals. The sympathetic favourite of the spectators who is a big fighter only lost in the final in five sets against the Japanese Sayaka Hirano. Pavlovich: "I am very satisfied with my performance in Bremen. It was a pity that I couldn't draw level in sets after leading 7:5. That was my chance to turn the match." On her way to the final the White Russian beat the top seeded Feng Tianwei, Yu Meng Yu and Sun Bei Bei one after the other from the Olympic Silver Medallist and Vice World Champion Singapore.



**Timo Boll**



**Ruwen Filius**

## Results of the 44. German Open in Bremen

(Names of the Butterfly players in bold)

### Men Singles

- 1. Timo Boll GER**
2. Vladimir Samsonov BLR
- 3. Jun Mizutani JPN**
3. Christian Süß GER

### Women Singles

1. Sayaka Hirano JPN
2. Viktoria Pavlovich BLR
3. Li Xiaodan CHN
3. Sun Bei Bei SIN

### Men's Doubles

- 1. Boll/Süß GER**
- 2. Mizutani/Kishikawa JPN**
3. Gao Ning/Yang Zi SIN
3. Karakasevic SRB/Tokic SLO

### Women's Doubles

1. Li Xiadan/Mu Zi CHN
2. Schall/Wu Jiaduo GER
3. Sun Bei Bei/Yu Meng Yu SRB
- 3. Hiroko Fujii/Kasumi Ishikawa JPN**

### U21, Men

- 1. Ruwen Filius GER**

News-----News-----News-----News-----News-----News-----News-----News-----News

## Guinness book of records?

A table tennis club in Croatia had a special idea. During an advertising campaign for table tennis, players build a pyramid of Butterfly table tennis balls in the presence of TV cameras. Now they are hoping for an entry in the Guinness book of records.



Interview with Timo Boll

## “Perhaps I never was in such good form”



After the victory at the German Open, Timo Boll got hardly any time to rest. Just one day after his triumph the number four of the World Ranking List is travelling to China for two days as an ambassador with a delegation of the economic ministry of North-Rhine-Westphalia. Before his journey the German Superstar had time for a quick interview.

“Mr Boll, you again dominated over all your opponents in Bremen. But the best Chinese were not taking part this time, because they were preparing for the World Championships. Would

you have preferred to play against the top stars?”

**“A few weeks ago I played against them in Kuwait and Qatar and beat a few of them among them the Grand Final winner Ma Long and the Olympic Champion Ma Lin. It is quite normal that the Chinese do their WC preparation and we do ours and the German Open is part of it. That doesn’t bother me.”**

“Bremen was the last big tournament before the WC in Yokohama and an important stop over. Where do you think you are standing yourself at the moment?”

**“Never before have I been in such good form for so long. My game has become more complete and more consistent after the glue ban and with the new material. I now hope to keep that until the WC in Japan because I want to try everything to reach the medal ranks in Yokohama.”**

“You had some difficult games in Bremen, especially the matches against the defenders Gionis from Greece and the Austrian Chen Weixing but also the semi final against the half distance player Jun Mizutani obviously took some effort...”

**“Yes, that is true. Since there is no more gluing the matches against defenders cost more power. Especially the semi final against Mizutani was very exhausting. My arm got heavier and heavier during these long rallies. I think it was obvious that both of us have brilliant equipment from our sponsor. Otherwise long topspin rallies like that are not possible.**

Mr Boll, is it true that you are travelling straight to China following the German Open without taking part in a tournament.”

**“Yes, because I am travelling with a delegation of the economic ministry of North-Rhine-Westphalia. Acting as an ambassador for politics and economics is a new experience for me. It widens the horizon and builds a link between your own sport and other areas. Among other things we will also visit the University in Peking where the Olympic Games took place in August. I am looking forward to go back there because winning the silver medal was one of my most important successes.”**

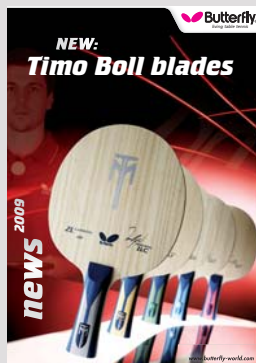
## Termine

**28. April - 5. May 2009**  
**Single-World-Championships,**  
**Yokohama (Japan)**

**27. Mai - 31. May 2009**  
**Pro Tour: Belarus Open, Minsk**

**03. June - 07. June 2009**  
**Pro Tour: China Open**

**11. June - 14. June 2009**  
**Japan Open, Wakayama**



Our Photo-Partners



Manfred Schillings

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All prices are recommended retail prices.



## ITTF World Ranking

Mens -March 2009

1	WANG Hao CHN	16	OVTCHAROV Dimitrij GER
2	MA Long CHN	17	SCHLAGER Werner AUT
3	MA Lin CHN	18	LI Ching HKG
4	BOLL Timo GER	19	JIANG Tianyi HKG
5	WANG Liqin CHN	20	PERSSON Jörgen, SWE
6	SAMSONOV Vladimir BLR	21	KAN Yo JPN
7	Chen Qi CHN	22	YOON Jae Young KOR
8	HAO Shuai CHN	23	GAO Ning SIN
9	JOO Se Hyuk KOR	24	PRIMORAC Zoran, HRV
10	CHUAN Chih-Yuan TPE	25	CHEN Weixing, AUT
11	RYU Seung Min KOR	26	MITZUTANI Jun JPN
12	OH Sang Eun KOR	27	HOU Yingchao CHN
13	KREANGA Kalinikos GRE	28	KO Lai Chak HKG
14	CHEUNG Yuk HKG	29	CRISAN Adrian ROU
15	MAZE Michael DEN	30	TANG Peng HKG



## ITTF World Ranking

Women - March 2009

1	ZHANG Yining CHN	16	DING Ning CHN
2	GUO Yue CHN	17	GAO Jun USA
3	LI Xiaoxia CHN	18	Li Jiao NED
4	GUO Yan CHN	19	PARK Mi Young KOR
5	WANG Nan CHN	20	LI Qian POL
6	FENG Tianwei SIN	21	YAO Yan CHN
7	Li Jia Wei SIN	22	DANG Ye Seo KOR
8	KIM Kyung Ah KOR	23	WANG Chen USA
9	WANG Yue Gu SIN	24	LI Jie NED
10	TIE Yana HKG	25	TOTH Krisztina HUN
11	JIANG Huajun HKG	26	WU Jiaduo GER
12	LIU Shiwen CHN	27	FUKUHARA Ai JAP
13	LIU Jia AUT	28	LIN Ling HKG
14	CAO Chen CHN	29	HIRANO Sayaka JPN
15	FAN Ying CHN	30	BOROS Tamara HRV

Single World Championships in Japan (28<sup>th</sup> of April to the 5<sup>th</sup> of May)

## Boll's dream of a medal

Timo Boll has a dream: victory ceremony takes of May at the Single onships in the Men Yokohama the number World Ranking List be on the podium for his career. The 28 year the most dangerous the dominating Chinese-five titles at the last onships. In the women event there are two Butterfly athletes, the number one of the World Ranking List Zhang Yining and the defending Champion Guo Yue, who will be fighting for the Gold Medal.



When the place on the 5<sup>th</sup> World Champi-Singles in four of the would like to the first time in old Butterfly is challenger of se who won World Champi-

If the Tamasu representatives are able to repeat or even improve on the excellent results of the year 2007 with three Gold Medals, one Silver Medal and three Bronze Medals in five events is largely depending on the performance of China's women in the Yokohama Arena. While Europe's women can only take the ambitious role of outsiders against their Asian colleagues and China's Butterfly duo, Timo Boll and his Butterfly colleagues – among them Japan's home favourite Jun Mizutani, who presented himself recently in top form – would like to break the dominance of the Chinese men.

The last players who managed this were Oh Sang Eun (South Korea) and Michael Maze, two Butterflies who reached the semi final in 2005.



**This time more than a semi final?:  
Oh San Eung and Michael Maze**

The best chances to achieve this in the Yokohama Arena, is statistically Timo Boll. The European Champion who won nearly everything during the last six month is in the position of a favourite straight after The World Cup Winner Wang Hao, Olympic Champion Ma Lin and the Grand Final Winner Ma Long, has thoroughly deserved this by his recent successes. As one of the top four seeds Boll does not meet any of his hardest opponents before the semi final but Germany's superstar knows from past WC experiences that this is no free ride to the so much desired WC medal. Boll: „The way to a medal at the WC is very long and covered with stones. It won't be easy to clear the way. But I am well prepared and am travelling with a lot of self confidence to Japan. Every opponent at a WC is difficult but I will make it difficult for the others too – my dream is a medal.“

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Tamao Butterfly Europa GmbH | Am Schumannshain 30h | 47441 Moers | Germany  
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**INO**  
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Size: 3XS - 4XL

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**TENGU LADY**  
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magenta/white/black  
Size: XS - XL

**€ 24<sup>90</sup>**

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Size: XS - XL

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Size: 3XS - 4XL



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**TENGU**

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Micro Dryfit Polyester  
Color: black/white/magenta  
Size: 3XS - 4XL



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**CUPIDO**

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Color: nine iron/opal/red/white  
Size: 3XS - 4XL



## jackets

€ 44<sup>90</sup>

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Inner jacket

Products available  
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Jakub Kosowski, Polish

**„It’s a great feeling to play good balls“**



Jakub Kosowski is a Polish national player and plays for the German Bundesliga Club SV Pluederhausen. The 26 year old attacking player is supported by Butterfly since he was 13 years old. Therefore it is not surprising that he swears on Butterfly equipment. The former student wants to get further ahead in Europe and his target is to reach a place on the podium at a European Championship. He nearly stopped playing but then he sensationally became Polish Champion in the men Singles. An interesting career which is far away from the end but read for yourself.

Jakub, you are number 115 on the World Ranking List and for years you have been a member of the Polish National Team. How did it all start before you became a table tennis professional?

**At first I played football. But we had a table tennis board at home and my father often played with me, just for fun, no training. When I became ten years old my father suggested that I should join a table tennis club, which I did. A short time later a Russian table tennis coach came to our club and taught me the basic techniques. When I was twelve I got into the Polish table tennis centre in Danzig. Leszek Kucharski was the coach there. I spent six years at the connected boarding school.**

What were your greatest successes on junior level?

**I came second twice in the singles in Poland in the Junior Championships and won the title four times in the doubles. Internationally we won the team event at the European junior Championships in 2000 and 2001.**

How did it go on after your years as a junior?

**I played four years in the Polish league and then went to Germany to play in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bundesliga for Post SV Hagen. During that season I surprisingly won the title at the National Polish Championships in the men singles.**

When did you seriously consider to become a table tennis professional?

**I was thinking about it already when I went to the table tennis centre in Danzig. I took my A-levels at the boarding school and started at University but I had to stop that because it didn’t go together with table tennis. That was the point when I decided to go to Germany. We got relegated with my first club Hagen from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 3<sup>rd</sup> league. I didn’t want to play there and preferred to go back to Poland to start studying again. In this critical phase I became Polish Champion and I thought that I could achieve more. I decided to stay in Germany and find a club in a higher league. I was lucky then that Arnold Beginn, the manager of TTC Juelich, talked to me and gave me a contract.**

You played two years for Juelich, with success?

**I think so. It was funny though that I always played 1:1 in Hagen as well as in my first year in Juelich. I could never win two games in one match.**

That sounds like a mental blockade, which can hit many table tennis players in a team event.

**Exactly, I was afraid of the second victory. In the third year I was okay though.**

You are now successful in Pluederhausen. By the way how did you cope with the glue ban?

**Like all the players I had to change my technique. Now the demands on the body are much higher. As a result of that a lot of players are injured.**

What do you think about the additional ban on tuners and boosters?

**The ITTF is forced to act quickly. You can’t forbid what you can’t check.**

You are now 26 years old and number 115 of the World Ranking List. What are your targets for the future?

**I don't look so much at the World Ranking List but the next step is surely to get into the top 100. For me it was an important step to become Polish Champion in the singles. I achieved that. Now I would like to climb up in Europe. I can beat everybody apart from Timo Boll and Vladimir Samsonov. I have got the potential. All the other players have moved very close together. Nowadays surprises are more likely than before. I hope to win a medal at a European Championship.**

What do you have to improve to reach your targets?

**There are quite a few things but the past years have shown that I can develop further. If you don't believe in that you stagnate. The one who stagnates for two or three years loses the fun in playing.**

Let's talk about the situation of table tennis in Poland, who had a great and successful tradition with players like Andrzej Grubba and Leszek Kucharski.

**That was a different generation who played different table tennis but they were very important for Poland. Today there are two table tennis centres in Poland, one in Danzig and the other one in Osterode. With that we have a good structure. The only problem is the youngsters from nowadays are less and less willing to concentrate fully on table tennis. The parents think that A-levels and University education are better future prospects. In schools there is very little advertisement for table tennis.**

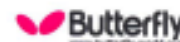
Is there something which really annoys you in table tennis?

**Yes, there is nobody in Poland who takes care of the time consuming and very important things around the game, like booking planes and accommodation, sorting out visas and all the other bits and pieces. We must be able to concentrate more on table tennis.**

What do you like best about table tennis?

**To play good balls. That is a great feeling if you succeed.**

## II BUTTERFLY INTERNATIONAL TRAINING CAMP



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Prices:	Official support from Butterfly for one year 300 € for 3 points

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## Tips and Tricks from the champion Part 25: Resume and Visions

*For the last time!* In 2003 Werner Schlager became sensationally World Champion in the Men Singles in Paris and was the number 1 in June on the World Ranking List. In the current ranking of the World Ranking List he is number 17. The 36 year old Austrian lives and lived table tennis like nobody else. Since years he trusts Butterfly Material and is an excellent counsellor of the company. In his book: „Matchball – Dreams and Triumphs“, which was published in 2006, he describes his career, his successes and disappointments, his opinions about table tennis and his very personal quite philosophical thoughts about life. **Now a father of a son he is just about to finish the Werner Schlager Academy, a table tennis centre in Vienna – Schwechat, which is supposed to set new impulses nationally as well as internationally. With this interview we finish a successful two year long series about practical aspect in table tennis.**

In this issue we have your contributions in our series „Tips and Tricks“ for the 25<sup>th</sup> time. You gave numerous Butterfly News Readers valuable inspiration and information. We covered a lot of practical topics of our sport. 25 is a good, round number and we want to conclude this series with a resume of our sport, show perspectives and have a good look at your big project: the Werner Schlager Academy. But one question first: „How did you feel about this series?“

**This interview series helped me to understand this wonderful sport even better. We talked about many topics which you as a sportsman probably don't think about so much.**



**Previous articles: push, counter hit, forehand – topspin, backhand topspin, flip, smash, balloon defence, backspin defence, block, service return, technical training, playing systems, endurance 1, endurance 2, strength, power, coordination, psychology 1, psychology 2, Training**

Your life has changed fundamentally a short while ago. At the beginning of February you and your partner Bettina Mueller became the proud parents of your son Nick. How did you experience this event and how is it going to influence your life as a professional?

**I am very grateful that I could experience the birth of my son. You see the real meaning of life just in front of your eyes. This intensive – positive time has influenced my private and professional life dramatically. Naturally my professional engagement will be adapted to the needs of my son.**

Could you imagine, that your son – if all the conditions are right – could also become a table tennis professional? Would you support that?

**I would support that, of course. The genetic presuppositions are not bad but the most important aspect is if he wants to play himself.**

Apart from your private life your business and table tennis life is also about to change quite a lot. The Werner Schlager Academy (WSA) is being built at the moment in Schwechat a suburb of Vienna. The WSA will be together with the German Table Tennis Centre in Duesseldorf the biggest table tennis centre in Europe. When do you expect the official opening?

**The building process is probably finished in the summer 2009.**

How did you get this idea?

**My friend and business partner Martin Soeroes asked the right questions at the right time.**

Who will run the centre? Who are the sponsors?

**The „Werner Schlager Company GmbH“ which is Martin Soeroes and I will run the centre. The most important sponsors at the moment are the town Schwechat, the region Niederoesterreich and the country Austria. Naturally we are also in contact with potential sponsors from business.**

Whom is the WSA going to address?

**The WSA is a centre for table tennis competence which will makes offers to all age groups and levels of table tennis players.**

How many boarding places do you have?

**There will be cooperation with a playgroup and schools but no classical boarding school.**

Have you looked at possible coaches?

**Of course. That will be international high class coaches. But at the moment I am not at liberty to quote names.**

Did you pick Schwetach as a strategic place (South-/South-East Europe) on purpose?

**The place Schwetach came up automatically because of its excellent infrastructure and the closeness to the airport in Vienna.**

What job are you going to take at the WSA after your active playing career? What are you doing now already?

**I am responsible for all relevant decisions considering the sporting aspects of the WSA. I will also offer my experience to the group of coaches.**

Finally let's talk about the present situation of our sport. What did change positively or negatively in professional sport where you have been part of during the last twenty years?

**The whole development to professionalism in table tennis is surely positive. A mental and a fitness coach are for example absolutely necessary in professionalism. Negatively are the permanently increasing numbers of competitions especially for youngsters. In the general classes you can still manage some kind of regular training. This has got to be reduced. The youngsters must have enough time to train properly.**

What is missing in Europe that table tennis is recognized more as a professional sport?

**We need more really good professional players, professional efforts and more presence of the media. The ITTF and ETTU really need to put some effort into this.**

Why are the membership of amateurs stagnating or even decreasing in many European Countries even in the strongest country Germany?

**I can't see a clear negative trend but one thing is for certain: Europe needs the right impulses to bring table tennis forward again.**

A word about your home country Austria: „What happened through your successes and those of the national team? Was there a boom?“

**Yes, the membership increased and is still increasing.**

Where lies the future of table tennis? Do you really believe that table tennis may become a „big sport“ like the ITTF President Adham Sharara always maintains?

**Table tennis is already a „big sport“ in some countries. For reaching the world stage all have to work with professionalism including the regions, clubs, coaches and active players.**

One word about the game itself, how is table tennis going to develop in the future after there have been made so many changes so fast during the last years (the ball, scoring, the service and the glue ban)?

**The ban of glue slowed the game down and made the rallies a lot more attractive. The change in scoring made the game more interesting. Further rule changes are not necessary.**

How would you stop the to and fro about gluing, boosters and tuners so that finally things are clear again for players, coaches, umpires and spectators?

**The ITTF should only come up with rules which can be controlled everywhere. Therefore it is really necessary for them to take action.**

Dreams and visions have often changed humanity and the world. Do you have a vision for table tennis?

**More media attention through more professionalism.**

**The publisher thanks Werner Schlager for his engaged commitment to the Butterfly News!**



The autographs of the Austrian are in demand!

## 4<sup>th</sup> International Butterfly Table Tennis Summercamp of the Hessian Table Tennis Association

### TRAIN LIKE THE PROS

2009 – A STORY OF SUCCESS WILL BE CONTINUED

29<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY TO 5<sup>TH</sup> OF AUGUST 2009

SPORT SCHOOL OF LSB IN FRANKFURT/M.

After the great success in the previous years, the Hessian Table Tennis Federation with its partner Tamasu Butterfly offer in 2009 any Table Tennis player the opportunity to train under **HTTV-head coach Helmut Hampf** (Coach of TTV Gönnern) and his team professionally.

Costs and Logis in EUR	Full board 3-bedded room	Full board 2-bedded room	Full board Single room	Training only
29 <sup>th</sup> of July to 5 <sup>th</sup> of August 2009 7 Overnight Stays	620,-	670,-	740,-	350,-

**Program:** Arrival at Wednesday 29th of July 2009 until 14:00 h. Departure on Wednesday 5th of August 2008, from 14:00 h. Daily 2 trainings units of 2 to 2-1/2 hours and on the day of departure 1 unit are scheduled. From Thursday to Tuesday evening physical training or swimming and sauna are possible.

- Training groups for all ages and levels
- Video-Analysis
- Many-Balls Training
- Material Consultation
- Service Schooling
- And much, much more ...

Registration latest until 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2009 at the main office of the HTTV. The registration is only confirmed after the fee has ben transferred to the HTTV-account. The number of participants is limited to 40.



Information and Registration at the Hessian Table Tennis Federation, Post Box 1140,  
35411 Pohlheim, Germany, e-mail: [geschaeftsstelle@httv.de](mailto:geschaeftsstelle@httv.de) or at [www.httv.de](http://www.httv.de)





## Block variations

### Part I: The passive backhand block

The block is a stroke technique which must be explained tactically first. In the early times of a forehand topspin about the middle of the sixties of the previous century the, block was discovered as an answer to the new developed topspin. The coming ball with topspin was met by the bat with a more or less closed angle when it was still rising above the table. Using the speed and rotational energy of the ball it was returned accordingly fast or slow. This basic block – the passive block – is still an important variety of the block. Especially the new-beginners gets the opportunity to learn the necessary feeling for blocking a ball. The passive „holding“ block is also used at top level in situations when the player runs out of time to to answer the opponent's spin ball actively. Being under time pressure he is trying to get his bat somehow to the ball and block it. Sometimes the return is not at all passive and very fast depending on the arriving ball and their playing material. Therefore the word „passive“ does not express the tactical meaning of the stroke but the moving aspect. The passive block is no active stroke movement. It is right the opposite the bat is only put into the right place. That makes the difference from a passive block to all other block varieties:

- the active counter block
- the counter spin block
- the backspin block
- the sidespin block

We will look at the counter and spin block in the following issues. Now we are concentrating on the passive backhand block which is demonstrated by a young Japanese national player. The 19 year old attacking player ranked number 10 in the U21 and number 114 in the men's World Ranking List. He is a promising talent with a lot of feeling for the ball.

### Die Technik im Überblick



# 18 Technique tips

The classical passive block is not divided into three phases – the starting phase and the backswing are missing - , therefore we concentrate on the moment of making contact with the ball and the accompanying movement. The pictures 1 (from the side) and 6 (from the front) show Kenji ready for returning the ball. He has the typical low basic position: feet parallel and a little bit more than shoulder wide apart, ankle, knee and hips bent. This way he has the optimal balance which enables him to bring his upper body forward and above the ball. The shoulder of the playing arm is moved slightly forward and the bat angle is closed.

Pictures 2 and 7 show Kenji just before making contact with the ball.



On picture 3 he is making contact with the ball.



# 19 Technique tips

If we look at the following pictures 4/5 and 8/9 after hitting the ball and compare these with 2/3 and 7 we can see that there is hardly any movement forward and up and he basically only holds the bat to meet the ball. Kenji hits the ball exactly in front of his body when the ball is still rising. Kenji lowers his bodyweight slightly towards the contact point and straightens it straight afterwards again (compare pictures 1-5 and 6-7). By doing this he has an even better position when making contact with the ball.



In comparison to other stroke techniques the passive block might look easy. This impression is deceiving, because the passive block demands the correct evaluation of the coming ball concerning rotation, placement and speed. The player must adjust the angle of the bat accordingly (more closed with a lot of spin, less closed with less spin). The feeling for the correct bat angle is important for the passive block: ball feeling pure. Therefore it is a basic stroke which is always used in certain game situations, especially in emergencies.

Let's have a look at the three pictures with typical mistakes which always occur more or less in this manner. They also apply for all the other block variations. Optimally the player is supposed to hit the ball right in front of his body (YES – yellow triangle). Kenji shows us two mistakes. At first he has his elbow up too high. Then it is difficult to find the right bat angle. Secondly we see exactly the opposite: Kenji has moved the elbow too close to the body. Now it is even more difficult to find the right angle and an optimal stroke position.

The second YES picture is stressing once more the optimal position of the body when making contact with the ball. The player shouldn't be too close to the table and not take the ball too early, that means not straight after the ball bounces but when the ball is rising. Let's have a look at the picture. Kenji is standing much too upright and has no optimal angle at the elbow of his playing arm. It will also be very difficult to achieve the right bat angle from this position.

