



**CONTACT: Joel Lidstrom
& Willy Leparulo**

EMAIL: championships@nctta.org

2009 College Table Tennis National Championships

April 3-5 in Rochester, Minnesota

WEBSITE: <http://www.nctta.com/champs/2009/index.html>

****NEWS RELEASE****

Tuesday April 7, 2009

ROCHESTER, Minnesota- Columbia 's Lineup Gamble Comes Up Short in Men's/Coed Team Semi-Final

Texas Wesleyan advanced to the Men's/Coed Team Final at the 2009 College Table Tennis National Championships, defeating a tough Columbia squad on quite a run during these Championships. Columbia, seeded fourth knew they'd have to get a little lucky to upset top-seeded Texas Wesleyan and decided to go all-in, pitting their top player, former Columbia National Champion, Carlos Alvarado against Texas Wesleyan's number 1, Mark Hazinski. Hazinski has already captured the Men's Singles title at these Championships, while Alvarado came out on top in the Men's Doubles event with Tahl Leibovitz (Queens College). Alvarado, a relative unknown in the US, took years away from the game until recently to come help his mates at Columbia University in these championships. Jose Pagan, University of Puerto Rico captain says about Alvarado through a translator, "Alvarado has great respect in Latin America for his contributions and play in the sport of Table Tennis."

Columbia's hopes were riding on Alvarado and Freshmen sensation Stephanie Shih, needing both to win to give their team a chance against a loaded Texas Wesleyan lineup. Alvarado would play first and Shih third and the remaining matches in the team contest favored TWU.

Mark Hazinski needed his entire game to outlast Carlos Alvarado 3-2 (11-9 in the fifth). Hazinski dominated early, with Alvarado hanging on to little more than hope that Mark would hit a dry patch. Alvarado steals game 3 with well placed points and Hazinski errors to stay in the match. Now, down 1-2 in the match and seeing that his teammate David Loeffler has already lost to Carlos Chiu in the second match of the contest (played simultaneously), he mustered up much of the talent and skills developed in Colombia some years ago to force a fifth game. Alvarado's serves left Hazinski puzzled and on his backfoot while Hazinski's advantage came with his blistering two winged attack. At 9-9 in the 5th set with the crowd solidly behind the underdogs, Hazinski showed what champions are made of by outlasting the former Colombian International winning the match and pushing the momentum to his TWU teammates. Chance Friend would go on to defeat Stephanie Shih in straight games pushing TWU into the Championship Finals.