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2010 College Table Tennis National Championships

April 9-11, 2010 in Waukesha, Wisconsin

WEBSITE: <http://www.nctta.org/champs/2010>

****NEWS RELEASE****

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Four Teams from the Golden State Hope to Strike Gold at 2010 Championships

“Eureka,” the Greek word for “I found it!” is the state motto of California. It’s a reference to the impact the discovery of gold had on the early history of California. And in the upcoming 2010 College Table Tennis Championships, slated for April 9-11 in the Milwaukee-area, six schools from California are hoping to start their own gold rush by taking home titles in the men’s/coed team event.

USC, UC San Diego and California (Berkeley) have all qualified teams to the Championships. Additionally, individuals from two other California schools, Cal State Northridge and Cal State Fullerton have qualified for the singles competition.

Founded in the wake of the gold rush, the University of California Berkeley has established itself as one of the premier universities in California. With its qualification into the 2010 Championships it is now hoping to establish itself as one of the premier schools for college table tennis as well. After missing out on a Northern California Division Championship by the slimmest of margins, the No. 13-ranked team received a wildcard invitation.

“We learned that we lost [the regional competition] by only 2 points 268 to 266 and we thought we would not be able to go to Nationals,” relates Mark Wei, UC Berkeley Table Tennis Club President. “We were really excited to receive the wildcard invitation.”

Wei and Co-President Carolin Chhor run the UC Berkeley Club which features a very active club website at <http://calttc.berkeley.edu> and are figuring to improve on their 14th place performance in the 2009 Championships.

Head south to the sunny Southern California area and you’ll find a unique college table tennis team from the University of Southern California, which goes by the name “the Ping Pong Posse,” or just “the Posse” for short. The Ping Pong Posse is a frequent qualifier to the College

Table Tennis Championship, having participated in four of the last five Championships. USC's best finish was 3rd place at the 2006 Championships in Fort Worth, Texas.

According to Club President, Charles Hu, the school is fielding a younger team than in recent years. "Our team is young, dynamic and has some unique playing styles."

The Posse is often in the headlines on campus and beyond, whether for their flamboyant fun and hip competitiveness or recently for creating a YouTube video that became a viral internet sensation: www.youtube.com/watch?v=hJn5L1nrkL4

From the extremely popular to the lesser known: it may be one of the largest single campus community colleges in the country, but De Anza College is little known in the world of college table tennis, quietly ascending to a No. 10 national ranking. Unfortunately De Anza players are also relatively unknown on their own campus as well, as the school only provides a small carpeted room for practice which forces the team off campus much of the time.

Team captain Koji Higashi mentions that "the team normally trains at Topspin Table Tennis club (which generously made jerseys for the team)." Higashi is not happy with the lack of recognition or support from the school's club council as it refused the club any funds this year. "We are paying for everything out of pocket," says Higashi.

Another challenge that a community college like De Anza faces is student-athlete turnover. "A 2 year college is merely to shoot in and out of where students race to get in classes and transfer to a 4 year university." Meaning that this may well be De Anza College's best opportunity to strike gold at the Championships.

Despite all of the challenges, Higashi believes with unwavering certainty in his team's ability to be competitive. Higashi hopes to challenge other Top 10 teams like Florida State, Baruch College, Ottawa, Princeton and Mississippi College "we are looking to beat those teams who are ranked a little above us." Will De Anza College score some upsets against some of the big 4-year universities? Come to the 2010 Championships to find out!

Spectators can enjoy a weekend full of table tennis at the 2010 College Table Tennis Championships which starts Friday April 9th and continues to Sunday April 11th at the Center Sports Complex in Waukesha, Wisconsin.

About NCTTA

The National Collegiate Table Tennis Association (NCTTA) is a non-profit organization established exclusively for promoting the sport of table tennis at the college level. As the national governing body for college table tennis in the United States and Canada, NCTTA organizes intercollegiate competition throughout North America. www.nctta.org

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