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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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Players from Different Schools Team Up to Dominate Men's Doubles

A doubles team usually consists of two players from the same school, but there's a quirk in the rules for doubles qualification, wherein if an individual qualifies, but no other players from the same school qualify, that individual can pair with a player from a different school. One pair from New York and another from the middle of the country took full advantage of this in the men's doubles competition.

Tahl Leibovitz (Queens College) and Yanjun Gao (La Guardia Community College) from New York took down the top seed Paulo Rocha/Fernando Yamazato (Lindenwood) in a tough five game match to advance to the finals. Leibovitz was the 2009 champion in men's doubles with Carlos Alvarado (Columbia).

Coach Santos Shih explains the strategy Leibovitz/Gao used to make it to the finals, "middle is the key, never let your opponent feel comfortable enough to attack." Shih also adds "Within the modern game there is no soft touch or hands and Tahl and Gao are excellent when it comes to this."

Could Leibovitz team with a different partner to win his second straight doubles championship?

Standing in his way were the pairing of Jose Barbosa (Lindenwood) and Alfred Najem (Emporia State). Najem was the 2008 collegiate champion in men's singles.

A doubles pair from different schools, makes practicing together difficult. Kelly Kendle, coach of the Lindenwood team, comments, "Alfred doesn't make it to Lindenwood much so they haven't really practiced together." Barbosa ended up without a doubles partner on his own team since there were an odd number of male players.

The men's doubles finals certainly featured some fast paced action, but in the end it was the control of Barbosa/Najem that made the difference as Gao's power shots kept coming back placed at strategic angles. Barbosa/Najem, dropped the second game, but cruised the rest of the way, 6,-7, 10, 10.

Spectators alike can enjoy a fantastic weekend of table tennis at the 2010 College Table Tennis Championships which continues through 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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