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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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Regional Rivalry Renews Raucousness and Respect in Team Preliminaries

Come Friday evening at the 2010 College Table Tennis National Championships, the excitement has grown inside the venue as the preliminary rounds of the men's/coed team event get underway. Format for the preliminary rounds is round robin groups of four teams, and the competition is fierce for the top two spots advancing to the championship round.

A series of "cho" shouts (the traditional table tennis exhortation) breaks soon breaks out on tables 15 and 16. Following one's ears to the action is good a rule of thumb at large tournaments like this one, and this is no exception.

The match faces Georgia Tech and Florida State. With the geographic proximity of these schools (and the quality and passion of their players and coaches), this is a naturally competitive duel. A pensive Florida State coach, Willy Leparulo remarked, "We have played several times before, and yes, there is a rivalry".

Aneece Khalek (Georgia Tech) defeats Kwok Cheung (Florida State) 3-1 to put his team ahead in the match, and match two continues the drama. Domenico Lilipolis (Georgia Tech) puts to great effect the sage advice of head coach George Cooper, leading Wei Wei Zheng (Florida State) 2-1. Asked for his impressions on the match, Georgia Tech player Yiling Peng says an appropriate, "very, very close". At 8-9 down, Lilipolis appears to have tied the game 9-all when Zheng misses a return, however Zheng claims a let serve. Referee Scott Ryan is called to the table, and the point must be replayed. Zheng claims the game, and also the 5th at deuce, team match now tied 1-1!

Victorious Wei Wei knows the vitality of his win to the team effort: "This was a very important match. It was my first match, and I was a little bit nervous. Our number one player is sick, and I took his place on the team. I wanted to take this chance to play well and not disappoint my teammates".

The Tech players are nervous about their chances in the next match, with Hassan Masoud facing Florida State's number one player, 2200 rated Andre Ng Hau. Racing to a 2-0 lead with

pure aggression, Hau looks like a safe bet to win. However, Hassan changes his strategy to neutralize Hau's power with short shots and serves, and the tactic is working (Game 3 to Hassan). Hau again leads 10-6 in the fourth game, but a cagey timeout sees him take the next 6 points to send this one to a 5th game! Spectator and big Georgia Tech fan (and Georgia State player) Tuan Pham says, "It was all about the timeout".

At this point, the match is no holds barred, high drama, high intensity; the epitome of college table tennis! Spectacular winning shots and net dribblers alike, every point was cheered loudly and passionately. Hau prevails in the 5th game, his powerful forehand just too much for the Tech player.

The match now rests on a decisive doubles showdown between Khalek/Masoud (GT) and Kwok/Hau (FSU). Asked for his outlook on the match, a confident Khalek commented on the strength of his opponent: "Their (FSU) number one player (Hau) is very strong. We wanted to avoid going to the doubles in this match, but in doubles, we will do our best and anything can happen."

The Tech team did their best indeed, and more. With a calculating service game, timely attacks, and amazing blocks, they took the doubles 3-1, and the team contest 3-2 over FSU. Cue up a big celebration for Georgia Tech. The players know their chance of advancement into the next round is now much greater

Spectators 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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