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2010 College Table Tennis National Championships

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****NEWS RELEASE****

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Early Matches of Team Elimination Rounds Bring High Drama

Sunday at the 2010 College Table Tennis National Championships brings the exciting conclusion of the Coed and Womens Team events. Two even matchups highlighted the round of 16 in the Coed Division. No. 19 Georgia Tech, who surprised many teams winning three close battles to take an impressive first place in their preliminary round robin, took on No. 12 California. Cal's strength at the top of the lineup carried them to a 2-1 lead in the match, with Liping Peng (Georgia Tech) and Long Ma (Cal) to contest the 4th match. Peng raced to a 2-0 lead, his teammates passionately exhorting him to play and win.

Now, Ma appeared more aggressive, using his strong forehand to drive Ma away from the table and overcome his blocking. Games 3 and 4 went to Ma, and the pressure was on for a 5th game! Would Peng force a decisive doubles match, or could Ma win the tie for Cal?

Game 5 began with two, pinpoint, down-the-line service winners for Peng, and two more service winners on his next services for a 4-2 lead! In the end, however, it was Ma's forehand again taking control, 11-6 to Ma in the 5th game, Cal victorious. When asked about his strategy coming back from 2-0 down, Long Ma said, "my team told me to just play." The advice worked, as Cal advances to face No. 3 Princeton next in the Quarterfinals.

The other nail biter in this round matched No. 6 Virginia Tech and No. 15 NYU. With NYU leading 2-1 and Eric Chen (NYU) leading Ashwin Palani (Virginia Tech) 2-0 in the fourth match, things looked bleak for Tech. In an incredible turnabout, Palani came back to win 3-2 and send the match to doubles, where the Tech pair of Ganesh Balasubramanian/Mohamed Younes quickly built a lead of 2-0 and 10-5 in the third game versus the NYU team of Joc Kim/Sandra Go. NYU fought hard to battle back to 10-9, but a Tech forehand finished the match, 3-2 and Tech advances to the Quarterfinals!

After the match, Tech's Palani said that one of the keys to his comeback in the critical fourth singles match was "keeping quiet" and controlling his nerves. Teammate Ganesh Balasubramanian said only he cheered for Palani, and this kept his teammate focused on the match.

Quarterfinal team contests in the Womens Division were mostly predictable wins for the favorites, with the exception of evenly-matched No. 6 Wisconsin and No. 8 Cornell. When asked for his outlook prior to the team contest, Wisconsin Coed team member Richard Huang said, "It will be close, but I think we've got it!" Just as he predicted, the contest went to the doubles, where the Wisconsin pair of Linjun Xu/Gina Lin defeated Cornell's Fiona Yu/Yu Chen 3-1 in a hard-fought match. Huang's forecast was dead on, Wisconsin moves to the Semifinal to face the powerhouse No. 2 Lindenwood team.

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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