

MARK SMYTHE NEWSLETTER

Edition 9 - May & June 2011



David Powell
Australian Singles Champion
2006 (U16), 2009 (U18) & 2010 (U21)



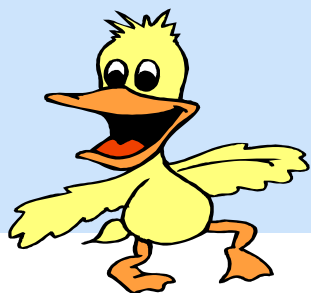
Heming Hu
Australian Singles Champion
2007 (U13&15), 2008 (U15),
2009 (U15) & 2010 (U18)



Lily Phan
Australian Singles Champion
2006 (U14), 2008 (U13&15) & 2009 (U15)



A NEWSLETTER DEDICATED TO PLAYERS COACHED BY MYSELF



HIGHLIGHTS

David wins his first Australian Senior Individual Title

David Powell had an excellent Australian Open by winning his first senior individual title. David won the Men's Doubles with Robbie Frank in what was an interesting turn of events of how they managed to team up together. Initially David was paired with a Korean player who wasn't able to attend in time for the Doubles (started on Thursday) due to the cancellation of many flights around Australia then Robbie's regular partner, William Henzell, was sick and forced to withdraw which led to this last minute scratch pairing. They were no. 2 seeds and in the final defeated the no. 1 seeds, Justin Han & Chris Yan 3-1 who 2 weeks earlier defeated William & Robbie in the final of the TTA Mounties Invitational held in NSW. Other top performances by David included, defeating Chris Yan in the Rd. 16 of Men's Singles & R-up in U21 Men's Doubles with Heming Hu.

Heming makes two finals at Australian Senior Open

Like David, Heming Hu had an excellent Australian Open and made the final of the U21 Men's Singles & Doubles. In the U21 Men's Singles he defeated the dangerous Wade Townsend (NSW) 4-1 in the SF then lost to Teng Teng Liu (NZ) 4-1 in the final. Teng Teng had earlier defeated David Powell 4-2 in the QF, and only lost to one player, Simon Gerada, for the whole week and included wins over Chris Yang and Justin Han. Heming made it r-up no. 2 after teaming with David Powell and lost to Teng Teng & Kevin Wu (NZ) 3-1 in the final.

Steven's big day out at Ballarat Open

After a tough but great experience at the World Junior Circuit Event in Guam, Steven Phan's next tournament was Ballarat Open where he had a big day out by winning the U15 Boys Singles and r-up in U18 Boys Singles. In the U15 SF Steven defeated the no. 1 player this year, Leon Suy, 3-2 then in the final James Lew 3-1 while in the U18's he defeated Leon Suy, again, 3-0 then in the SF Daniel Zou 3-1 but just came up short in the Final against Nathan Van Der Heiden 3-2 (11-9 in the 5th).

Atul's surprise U13 win at Ballarat Open

Atul Shrestha, no. 2 seed, won the U13 Boys Singles title at the Ballarat Open. In the final he had a great 3-0 victory over the no. 1 seed Yang Shen. This made it the 2nd U13 Singles title this year for Atul and is becoming one of the brightest stars in the younger age groups.

Yang Recaptures form at Albury/Wodonga Open

After a wrist fracture earlier this year which didn't allow him to hit for 6 weeks, Yang Shen recaptured some form by winning the U13 Singles title at the Albury/Wodonga Open – he was the no. 1 seed. Yang also made the SF of U15 Singles after defeating the in form James Lew in the QF. Yang is one of the stars in the U13 age group and will be one of the main contenders for the National title later this year.

Mahi continues to dominate the U11 Girls

Mahi Joshi continued her dominance of the U11 Girls by winning the Singles event at Ballarat Open. To decide the winner, Mahi beat good friend and perennial runner up Christina Nguyen.

HANDY HINTS

Players usually perform their best when mind and muscles are relaxed.

BEST WINS

- David Powell beat Chris Yan (NSW) – Australian Senior Open
- Heming Hu beat George Tang (NSW) – Australian Senior Open
- Heming Hu beat Wade Townsend (NSW) – Australian Senior Open
- Heming Hu beat Sharrod Pandit (SA) – Australian Senior Open
- Steven Phan beat Leon Suy x 2 – Ballarat Junior Open
- Daniel Zou beat Joshua Cheung – Ballarat Junior Open
- Daniel Zou beat Richard Vecoli – Ballarat Junior Open
- Eugene Ng beat Scott Gilmore – Ballarat Junior Open
- Eugene Ng beat Daniel Zou – Albury/Wodonga Junior Open
- Yang Shen beat James Lew – Albury/Wodonga Junior Open
- Kaveesh Jayasinha beat Philip Riha – Ballarat Junior Open
- Atul Shrestha beat Yang Shen – Ballarat Junior Open
- Jakob Smith beat David Cyngler x 2 – Ballarat & Albury/Wodonga Junior Open
- Augustine Nguyen beat Hayden Choi – Albury/Wodonga Junior Open
- Charles Chan beat Augustine Nguyen – Albury/Wodonga Junior Open

NEAR MISSES

David Powell

- Lost to Roope Kantola (Finland) 11-9 in the deciding 5th set, World Championships consolation event
- Lost to Trent Carter (NSW) 11-6 in the deciding 5th set, Australian Open Team final.

Steven Phan

- Lost to Nathan Van Der Heiden 11-9 in the deciding 5th set, U18 Boys Singles Final Ballarat Open

Scott Gilmore

- Lost to Leon Suy 11-7 in the 5th and deciding set, U15 QF at Ballarat Open

Mahi Joshi

- Lost to Winston Phan 11-9 in the deciding 5th set, Final Division 6 Singles at Albury/Wodonga Open
- Lost to Shannon Debono 12-10 in the deciding 5th set, SF U15 Singles at Albury/Wodonga Open

BITS AND PIECES

Jeff Plumb interview

A good friend and adversary as a player for many years, Jeff Plumb, asked to interview me a few months ago. This was eventually done on 15th May and can be viewed on Jeff's website, pingskills.com, under the "blog" section.

Bye Bye David, Heming and Yang

David Powell, Heming Hu and Yang Shen will be missing from the local scene for while as they go overseas to play full-time (25+ hours per week) and seek to improve their level.

David left on June 27 and will be back early in February for the Olympic Qualification. This trip will see David become a professional player for the 1st time where he will play league (Sept – April) in Poland and also represent Australia at the World University Games (Aug. 11 – 23) held in China.

Heming, who trained in China from January – June, went back on June 25. He will come back in Sept. to compete at Aust. Junior C'ships and for end of year exams where he is doing 2 Yr. 12 subjects.

Yang has been in China since June 10 and will be there until August 21.

It's great to see these players working so hard to improve their standard. They have short term (4-10 months) goals together with longer term (3-4 years) goals. Regardless if they achieve those goals or not, these experiences will help their personal development and I'm confident all three will be successful later in life in their occupation/s & financially.

STABLE OF STARS

Below is a list of regular tournament players I coach (Individually) and how long for.

Open Men

Michael Worobec (Croydon) – August 2007 to December 2009 then on & off April – December 2010 then February 2011 – May 2011

Dominic McDonnell (Croydon) – February to October 2007 then on & off since September 2010

Uner 21 Men

David Powell (Croydon) – December 1999

Under 18 Boys

Heming Hu (Dandenong) – July 2007 then on & off since January 2011

Josh Cheung (Croydon) – November 2008

David Cynghler (Maccabi) – On & off from Sept. – Dec. 2010 then since February 2011

Under 18 Girls

Lily Phan (Croydon) – July 2004 to June 2009 then on & off since June 2009

Under 15 Boys

Steven Phan (Dandenong) – January 2004 to May 2006 then July 2007 to April 2011 then on & off since May 2011

Scott Gilmore (Dandenong) – March 2007

Kaveesh Jayasinha (Dandenong) – On & off Sept. to Dec. 2009 then since January 2010

Daniel Zou (Dandenong) – November 2006

Eugene Ng (Croydon) – On & off from April to August 2009 then since September 2009

Hayden Choi (Coburg) – On & off since January 2010

Clarence Chow (Croydon) – March 2010

Jakob Smith (Croydon) – April 2010

Eric Nguyen (Croydon) – On & off from March to September 2010 then since October 2010

Under 13 Boys

Dominic Huang (Dandenong) – May 2005 to May 2011 then on & off since June 2011

Charles Chan (Dandenong) – On & off from March 2007 to March 2008 then from April – September 2008 then since February 2011

Atul Shrestha (Croydon) – July 2007 then since January 2008

Yang Shen (Dandenong) – June 2008

Dominic Nguyen (Croydon) – January 2010

Augustine Nguyen (Croydon) – February 2010

Winston Phan (Croydon) – November 2010

Under 11 Boys

Dylan Nguyen (Croydon) – January 2010

Under 11 Girls

Mahi Joshi (Croydon) – May 2009

Christina Nguyen (Croydon) – February 2010

Over 40 Men

Rod Kempton (Croydon) – On & off since January 2007

Over 50 Women

Daisy O'Bryan (M'Vet) – On & off January 2008 to March 2008 then since April 2008

DUCK'S VIEW

COACHING (part 1)

Coaching players to help improve their standard can involve many aspects. Over the next few editions I'll go through what skills I believe are required. In this edition I'll cover some of my general thoughts.

I firmly believe the higher standard player's become the best coach's. This is evidenced by most top countries on the world scene where the National Coach has either been a former National player or one of the elite players. This is also evidenced in Australia where majority of the best younger players have been coached & developed by current or former National/Elite players. In China, a prerequisite to be a National or even provincial (State) coach is to have been a National or professional provincial player. Generally once a player reaches a higher level they have a better understanding of what is considered a good technique & feeling for all shots. Also, they have learned what shots become more important as their standard improves through the years – some skills that are considered very important at lower levels (first 6-7 years) become less important at the higher level (Senior State & National Team level).

Individual v's Group sessions

This has been a topic for interesting discussion over the years, especially in lower standard countries like Australia where players do not play many hours per week. In the developing years (first 6-7 years) I believe Individual sessions are critical. Due to the lack of hours (up to 10) played by most Australian youngsters each week, having weekly Individual sessions allows techniques/shots to develop faster compared to players who only attend Group sessions (one coach for 6-20 players). In countries where the sport is taken more seriously, the young players would train 15-25+ hours per week in group sessions. It's this situation where Individual sessions become less important as the volume of training allows the development of techniques/shots to occur faster than someone who would have a weekly program which includes, 1-2 hours Individual, 2-4 hours training in group sessions and one pennant – this would be a typical weekly program of majority of players I coach.

In the article from 2010 March & April edition I made mention that a weekly program for a player should involve min. 10% of time for Individual sessions and min. 50% of Group/own training. For lower level Australian players to improve over a 3-4 year period, I estimate 1 hour of Individual would equate to approx. 3-4 hours of Group, hence the usual price difference with the two options. Once a player reaches a higher level then a 1 hour Individual would equate to 1-2 hours of Group/own training. The main reasons why Individual sessions are more beneficial include,

- 100% focus of coach is on one player
- Coach can hit the ball in the right place & weight for beginners to learn shots in the best way
- Quality of ball hit by the coach, for improving players, is usually higher than in Group sessions

Another way to make Group sessions higher quality is creating smaller groups of 3-5 players of similar standards. This allows the coach to spend more time on the table with all players compared to a larger group but can be difficult to find a group of players of similar level who are available at the same time.

From my experience, developing players (first 6-7 years of playing) who are more serious about improving have a weekly program which includes Individual & Group sessions plus Pennant/Fixtures. Individual sessions focus on, technique for all shots then gradually linking them together combined with some training while the group sessions act as the glue and allow shots and movements to stick together through carefully constructed exercises by the coach then using those shots in some games.

Summary

For most Australian juniors, having a good Individual coach will allow a player to reach a higher level compared to a player who does not have a coach or has a lower standard coach but there are exceptions when a player is quite talented and can overcome not having a coach through the developing years.

TOURNAMENT RESULTS

INTERNATIONAL

WORLD SENIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS, NETHERLANDS (May 8-15) – 1 played

David Powell

Men's Singles – Lost to Jorge Campos (Cuba) 4-0 and Roope Kantola (Finland) 3-2

Men's Doubles (with William Henzell) – Won Kosovo 3-0 then lost to Austria 3-0

Mixed Doubles (with Vivian Tan) – Won Faroe Island 3-1 then lost to Nigeria 3-1

NATIONAL

MOUNTIES INVITATIONAL (May 28 & 29) – 1 played

David Powell

QF Men's Singles – Defeating Chengxing Li (NSW) 3-2 and Nana Yaw Boerang (NSW) 3-1

Lost to William Henzell (SA) 3-1 and Robbie Frank 4-2

SF Men's Doubles (with Nam Ho Oh) – Defeating Wade & Kane Townsend, lost to Henzell & Frank

AUSTRALIAN SENIOR OPEN (June 11 & 17) – 2 played

David Powell

Individual Events

Won Men's Open Doubles

R-up U21 Men's Doubles

QF Men's Open Singles

QF U21 Men's Singles

Team Event

Silver, 7-2

Best wins, Kevin Wu (NZ) & Kane Townsend (NSW)

Lost to Bruno Levis Soto (QLD) & Trent Carter (NSW)

Heming Hu

Individual Events

R-up U21 Men's Singles

R-up U21 Men's Doubles

Team Event

Silver, 4-1

Best win, Sharrod Pandit (SA)

Lost to Kiet Tran (NSW)

STATE

BALLARAT JUNIOR OPEN (May 21) – 20 played

Steven Phan

Won 15 Boys Singles

R-up 18 Boys Singles

Daniel Zou

Won 15 Boys Doubles

Won Division 1 Singles

SF 18 Boys Singles

Kaveesh Javasinhe

Won Division 2 Singles

R-up 15 Boys Doubles

Atul Shrestha

Won 13 Boys Singles

Won 13 Boys Doubles

Yang Shen

R-up 13 Boys Singles

R-up 13 Boys Doubles

Dominic Nguyen

Won 13 Boys Doubles

SF 13 Boys Singles

Augustine Nguyen

SF 13 Boys Singles

Winston Phan

R-up 13 Boys Doubles

Christina Nguyen

R-up 11 Girls Singles

SF 13 Girls Singles

Mahi Joshi

Won 11 Girls Singles

R-up 11 Doubles

Dylan Nguyen

Won 11 Doubles

R-up 11 Boys Singles

BALLARAT SENIOR OPEN (May 22) – 3 played

VICTORIAN CLOSED VETERANS (May 29) – 1 played

ALBURYWODONGA JUNIOR OPEN (June 4) – 16 played

Josh Cheung
SF 18 Boys Singles

Eugene Ng
SF 15 Boys Singles

Kaveesh Jayasinha
Won 15 Boys Doubles

Yang Shen
Won 13 Boys Singles
Won 13 Boys Doubles
R-up 15 Boys Doubles

Atul Shrestha
R-up 15 Boys Doubles
R-up 13 Boys Singles
R-up 15 Boys Doubles

Mahi Joshi
R-up 13 Girls Singles
R-up 13 Girls Doubles
SF 15 Girls Singles

Winston Phan
Won 13 Boys Doubles
Won Division 6 Singles

Dominic Nguyen
R-up 13 Boys Doubles
SF 13 Boys Singles

Christina Nguyen
R-up 13 Girls Singles

ALBURY/WODONGA SENIOR OPEN (June 5) – 3 played

David Powell
Won Men's Open Singles

Yang Shen
Won Men's Restricted Singles
Won Division 1 Singles
R-up Division 2 Singles
SF Men's Open Singles

David Cyngler
R-up Men's Open Doubles

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CROYDON VETERANS OPEN (June 26) – 2 played

Businesses

This is free of charge and restricted to players I have coached or currently coach and their families.



Hua is the brother of Heming



Mark is the half brother of David Powell

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