

## **An Official's View**

**By Dr. Azmy**

### ***Congratulations and Celebrations***

I would like to congratulate USATT President Sheri Pittman and the rest of the USATT Board for returning voting power back to the USATT membership. The whole Board should be commended for this unanimous vote.

Let DEMOCRACY rule. I also hope that we all have learned from this experience and do not repeat the same mistakes again.

Let us celebrate the success of the U.S. Open & Pro-Tour Tournament. Many of us have heard positive comments and praise about the Tournament. No single individual can take the credit for such a superb performance. It was teamwork and dedication.

It is also the outcome of a long process which started several years ago. A process which takes place before, during and after every tournament. A group of people have to organize the tournament six months in advance, and every day during the tournament they meet at night to review the daily problems and think and plan solutions to avoid them the next day.

The seeds, which had been planted years ago, and the trees, which have been pruned every season, are giving us the fruits of successful tournaments. Let us give appreciation to the hard work of the USATT office, Ben and Margaret, etc., etc.; the registration staff, etc., etc.; the crews who set the tables, barriers, nets, mats, lights, air-conditioning, water, etc., etc. On the other hand we have the tournament committee: Y.C. Lee, Jimmy McClure, etc., etc.; the officials in general; the volunteers at the control desk; the computer operators, etc., etc. And last but not least the support of the president and the board. Let us celebrate our work and continue to work together for more and more successful tournaments.

Back on track for our Officials' Seminar, which we usually hold every U.S. Nationals and U.S. Open. This time we had a guest speaker, Mr. Shirakawa, an International Referee from Japan and a member of the ITTF Equipment Committee. He gave us a demonstration of Racket Testing. It was very useful knowledge for those who are preparing to become Referees. Racket testing is becoming a common practice in ITTF International Championships.

The rest of the seminar dealt with new rules, which are below. Customarily USATT adopts all rule changes by the ITTF. However, any deviation from the rules must be stated clearly on the Entry Form.

#### The following rules are effective on October 1, 2000:

**2.3.1** The ball shall be spherical, with a diameter of 40 mm.

**2.3.2** The ball shall weigh 2.7 g.

#### The following rules are effective September 1, 2000:

**2.5.8** A player obstructs the ball if he, or anything he wears or carries, touches it in play when it is traveling towards the playing surface and has not passed beyond his end line, not having touched his court since last being struck by his opponent.

**3.2.4.7** Advertisements on nets shall be in a slightly darker or slightly lighter shade of the background color, shall not be within 3cm of the tape edge and shall not obscure visibility through the mesh.

**3.2.4.9.2** Not more than 3 clearly separated advertisements, contained within a combined total area of 200cm<sup>2</sup> on front or and side of a shirt.

**3.4.1.5** When a player is formally warned for bad behavior, a yellow marker shall be placed on or near the score indicator.

**3.5.2.5** A racket shall not be changed during an individual match unless it is accidentally damaged so badly that it cannot be used, if a player changes his racket during an individual match without notification, the umpire shall suspend play and report to the referee.

**3.5.2.9** The referee may disqualify for the remainder of a competition anyone who has twice been sent away from the playing area during that competition.

**4.1.9.1** The [World] Championships shall include men's team, women's team, men's singles, women's singles, men's doubles, and mixed doubles events; in doubles events, both players shall be from the same Association.