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Texas A&M Women's Table Tennis Team Travels to National Championships

Texas A&M Women make their mark at the National Champs

Texas A&M star quarterback Johnny Manziel has made the eyes of the nation focus on the Aggies as he prepares for the 2014 NFL draft.

Not nearly as well known as Johnny Football, the talented members of Texas A&M's women's table tennis team are also causing some buzz on the College Station campus. The Lady Aggies are booked for their first visit to the 2014 TMS College Table Tennis Championships in Monroeville, Pennsylvania in early April.

All four members of the Texas A&M women's team have proven to be sharp players in NCTTA tournaments. They're also bright graduate students excelling in the classroom. All four table tennis standouts are international students.

Let's meet the Lady Aggies:

--Merinda Volia is a second-year master's student in nuclear engineering. A native of Indonesia who first played the Olympic sport as a ten-year-old, Merinda didn't dream of playing in a table tennis tournament when she arrived at Texas A&M. But she discovered a table at the university's recreation center, joined the table tennis club and the rest is history.

--Priyam Parikh earned her bachelor's in technology in mechanical engineering in Mumbai and is enrolled in the master's in mechanical engineering program at A&M. She also works at the Industrial Assessment Center at the university as a graduate research assistant. Priyam hopes to make A&M proud at the national championships. The games will attract 300 of North America's best collegiate table tennis players April 4-6.

--Olga J. Reyes Valdes began playing table tennis in elementary school in her native country of Columbia. She's working on her doctorate in process safety. She enjoys playing various sports, traveling, going out with friends and outdoor activities.

--Song-yi Shin is a graduate student majoring in physiology on the College Station campus. She's played table tennis since she was an 11-year-old in her native South Korea. Like many other young women, Song-yi loves

shopping, romantic movies and traveling. Teammates say her sense of direction isn't the greatest, but joke that she never gets lost in a shopping mall!

Hung-Ming Chou, a research assistant and doctoral student in electrical and computer engineering at Texas A&M's Wisenbaker Engineering Research Center, serves as president of the school's table tennis club. The entire club is 100 percent in support of the women's team. Members stay busy helping them make the journey to the Pittsburgh area for the national tournament.

"As a club we are working hard to do the fundraising so that our women's team is able to attend this great event," Hung-Ming said.

For more information on the Texas A&M women's table tennis team, contact Hung-Ming Chou at homing93@gmail.com

The 2014 TMS College Table Tennis Championships is hosted by the [National Collegiate Table Tennis Association](#) and the Visit Monroeville and is one of the most competitive table tennis tournaments in North America featuring 6 events: Men's and Women's Singles and Doubles, and Men's/Coed Teams, Women's Teams. The event is sponsored by TMS International, Newgy Industries, Butterfly.

Players and spectators alike will enjoy a jam-packed weekend of table tennis at the [2014 College Table Tennis Championships](#). The event starts Friday April 4th and continues to Sunday April 6th at the Club Sport and Health in Monroeville, Pennsylvania.

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

About USA Table Tennis

Headquartered in Colorado Springs, USATT is the national organizing body for table tennis in the United States, serving 9,000+ members and nearly 300 clubs. USATT sanctions 200+ events a year including the US Open and US Nationals. USATT is affiliated with the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF), as well as the United States Olympic Committee (USOC). www.usatt.org & tabletennis.teamusa.org

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