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TMS College Table Tennis Championship Volunteers from Iowa

Jarol Duerksen first met his wife, Leah, 57 year ago at a college table tennis tournament in Portland, Oregon. Call it table tennis love at first sight.

Married for 54 years, the Iowa City, Iowa residents are serving as faithful volunteers at the 2014 TMS College Table Tennis Championships.

"We love being with the kids," Jarol Duerksen said as he joined Leah staffing the practice tables for college players Friday at the Club Sport and Health in Monroeville, Pennsylvania. "We see the same kids over and over. It's fun to renew friendships."

For that reason, their 11-hour road trip from Iowa in early April to the venue near Pittsburgh was worth every minute. It marks their fourth NCTTA national tournament to join its team of volunteers.

They hit the road for the table tennis championships in Rochester, Minnesota a few years ago followed by the tourney near Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Last April, the Iowa couple traveled to the games in Rockford, Illinois. Once the action near Pittsburgh wraps up, the Duerksens will put the 2015 TMS College Table Tennis Championships in Eau Claire, Wisconsin on their calendar.

"We have fun," said Jarol Duerksen, 76, as more than 250 players from such schools as Mississippi College, Toronto, Texas Wesleyan, Duke, California, Penn State, Georgia Tech and Northeastern battled for points April 4-6.

Year-round, Jarol and Leah Duerksen, 75, are on a mission to make Iowa more table tennis-friendly. They frequently take their paddles to table tennis clubs in Iowa City and Cedar Rapids and tell their friends. They also invite table tennis players in the community to give the sport a try on their two tables at home. In 2012, the couple volunteered at the North American Olympic Table Tennis Trials in North Carolina.

In addition, they both compete as table tennis players in the Iowa Senior Olympics and National Senior Olympics that's taken them to California and Ohio.

"Competition never gets old," says Jarol Duerksen, a pastor who enjoys table tennis, but loves doing God's work. After being away from the sport for 45 years, the Iowa couple got back in the game. They

discovered table tennis is a terrific form of exercise for people of all ages.

The Duerksens, NCTTA leaders say, are part of a team of wonderful volunteers who help the national tournaments run smoothly from one year to the next. "We are always indebted to our volunteers and thank them for generously contributing their time," said NCTTA President Willy Leparulo. "Without them, there would be no event."

Whether it's helping with live video streaming, setting up tables, serving as referees or working the registration desk, table tennis volunteers are invaluable. Contact us at NCTTA headquarters and we can add you to our volunteer team next season!

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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