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2008 College Table Tennis National Championships

April 11-13 in Rochester, Minnesota

WEBSITE: <http://www.nctta.org/champs/2008/index.html>

****NEWS RELEASE****

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TEXAS WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY: CAN YOU SPELL DYNASTY?

“Texas Wesleyan is the New York Yankees of college table tennis,” said Willy Leparulo, NCTTA President. “Despite other scholarship schools and several other quality programs, the Rams continually dominate the Championships.”

They have garnered 29 of 38 national titles since 2002. The co-ed squad has won four consecutive team titles. And after sweeping all seven titles in 2007, including co-ed and women’s teams, men and women’s singles and doubles, and mixed doubles, the Fort Worth-based franchise is ready to rock the competition at next week’s College Table Tennis National Championships in Rochester.

The table tennis squad is unlike any other in the United States, with complete training facilities, professional coaching, and a fully-funded travel budget. Although the program debuted in 2001, it wasn’t until the 2006-07 season that the Athletic Department adopted it as one of its own.

“I think several schools look up to Wesleyan and do their best to emulate their program,” said Leparulo. “Attaining team clothing sponsorships, traveling to USATT-sanctioned tournaments, and implementing regular practice sessions can be very difficult.”

Both the co-ed and women’s teams went 9-0 in Texas Division league play, including victories over such schools as Texas, Texas A&M, and Hardin Simmons. Their roster includes a who’s who of table tennis powerhouses from around the world. The women’s team includes players from Croatia, Germany and Vietnam, while the co-ed squad represents such countries as Mexico, India, and Romania. The co-ed team will have to beat past second-ranked Princeton, runner-up in 2006 and 2007. The women’s main foe will be second-ranked Stanford. Stanford placed second in 2007, but won the title in 2006.

Five men and six women of the Rams squad will compete in the individual events. Other schools sending several participants include Northwestern, Princeton, and USC, each sending four men, and USC sending four women.

“There are some schools that take on this serious attitude toward table tennis with the hope of being able to share the shadow of dominance that Texas Wesleyan has shown the past few of years,” said Leparulo.”