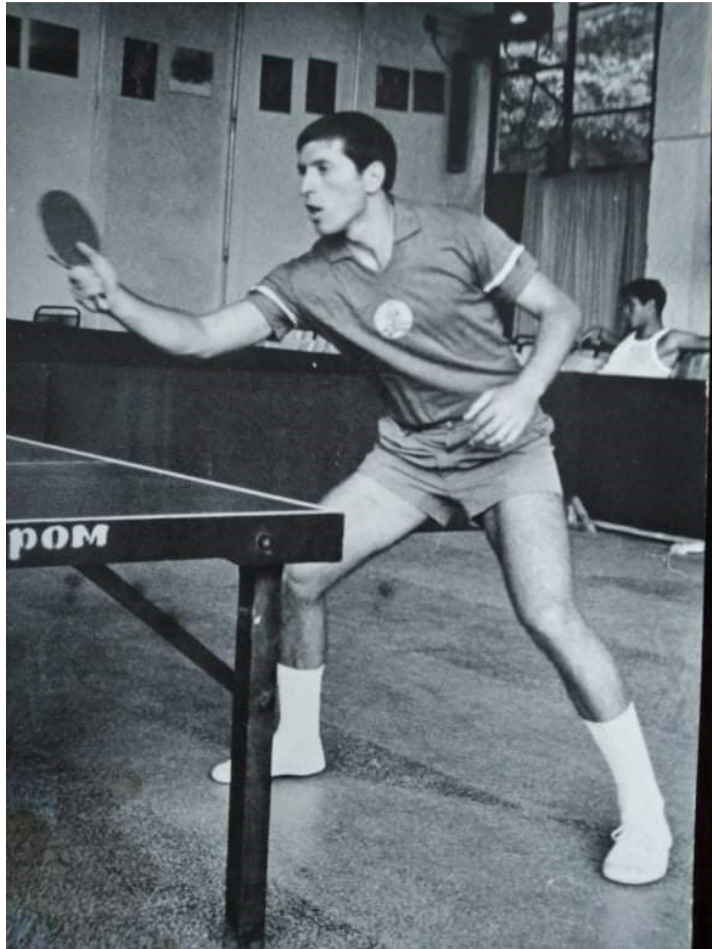


## George Damianov (1950 -2021)

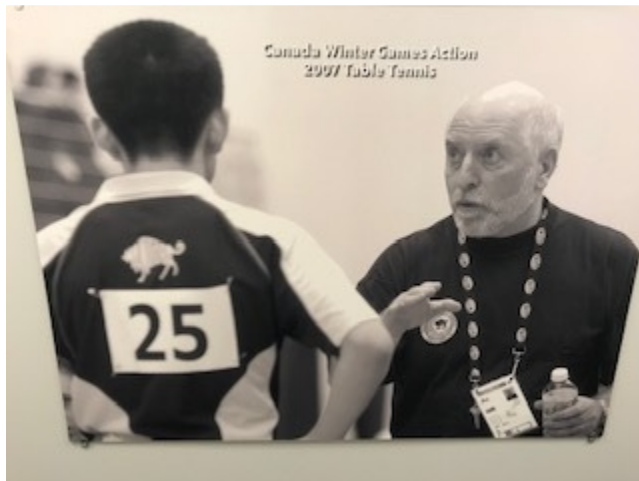




## MTTA Tributes to George:

It is with great sadness and a heavy heart that I have to report to you the passing of our former Head Coach George Damianov. George started with us in the fall of 2002 and retired in the spring of 2012. I know that George touched each and everyone of us with whom he dealt. He was a superb table tennis coach yes, but he was far more than this! He used table tennis as a medium to teach all of us about life, about values, work effort and how to treat each other. George cared deeply about the well-being of all of his players over the decade that he was with us and beyond. Indeed, in the words of his successor Milcho Uzunov, "He was the main reason I to be part of MTTA, from the beginning I worked with athletes who were built by Mr. Damianov, he was worried about their sport and personality developments. He always helped me with advises for everything in coaching and life also. George is always in my heart."

There is a great reminder of George in the form of a super picture in the 5th floor hallway of Sport Manitoba of George coaching one of his students, Terry Zhang (B15) , at the 2007 Canada Winter Games where he won bronze and his team mate Frederick Eng (B18) also won bronze.



Rest in Peace George.

Ron Edwards  
M.T.T.A.





**Rest well George. Your team was always proud of you.**

I'm feeling so devastated, wonderful person, coach and human is gone! Very sad day for me, for all of us!

Andrzej "BOB" Wiewiora, Player & friend

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Oh man, this is so sad ... George always treated everyone with dignity and respect. One time during the Western Canadians I was playing, and it's all tied up going to the final game ... Me - "Coach, how can I win" George - "score more points" and then he laughs and tells me to relax and have fun. He earned our trust and respect and will be greatly missed.

Jay Willman, Active 4 Life Player & Weston Community Centre Coach

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I am so sorry to hear this but glad that George touched our table tennis lives. Rest well George.

Andrew Bachmann, Winakwa Community Centre Coach

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George was so special. With all his knowledge, experience and passion... he always showed and cared about kids, coaches and everyone! His actions always reminded you to remember that it's people that are most important!..." you gotta show them that you care before they care what u know " - Teddy Roosevelt RIP George!

Ted Bigelow, Former Sport Manitoba Director of Sport

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Rest in peace George ❤️ - Jerome Tan, Player

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We are saddened by the news of George's passing.

George developed a good relationship with everyone, especially with players and parents. He had his own way of communication - either by the phone or in person - not by email. He always stayed behind to wait for the parents to pick up the last kid from the gym or was willing to drive some kid home when the parents were not able to pick up their kid. During his time here, the gym was always full of players, older and younger, as well as adults. It was also full with players with league as well. We had a fond memory of the full-attended farewell party at Mathew's house.

George will be greatly missed by all of us.

Rest in peace George.

Ha Nguyen and family

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Such sad news! I met George and his wife at the beginning of his coaching career in Winnipeg.

I helped him the first months of his new coaching job. I drove him around to search for a car, look for a cheap apartment, helped set up the tables before practices and tournaments.

He coached both of my kids Alex and Kevin and he was my doubles partner in some of the tournaments.

George was a Table Tennis Guy, an Icon!!! He used to be a Bulgarian top player. He played several years for the National Team in Bulgaria. He Coached the National Team of Bulgaria and the National Team of Seychelles. Lastly for 10 years he was coaching kids in our Province with great success. His passing is a huge loss for Table Tennis around the World.

Rest In Peace my Friend

Greg Dzioba, Executive & Official

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It is a devastated news; he touched every member of MTTA; he will be always remembered. Rest in peace George.

Gregory Chan, Coach & Official

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Very sad news about George.

I don't know how he died, but George can be proud about how he lived. He helped build many of our top players and was a positive influence on everyone. He leaves a legacy that lasts till today. He will be missed and remembered.

Royle Derbitsky, Executive & Official

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Yes, George touched each and everyone of us with whom he dealt. Rest in Peace George.

Lin Deng and family with great sadness

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Received the sad news today of the passing of my former coach, George Damianov.

Coach George was my first competitive table tennis coach, from 2007 to 2012 when he retired. He instilled in me a love of table tennis, and taught many lessons that went beyond the table.

I have many great memories with George I will always cherish, and I am so grateful that I had the opportunity to see him in Bulgaria in 2017.

I will never forget his oft said words from the coaching bench (in his thick Bulgarian accent):

'Come on Matthew'.

George, you will be missed.

Matthew Lehmann, Player

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This is really sad. George was a fantastic coach, a tremendous role model and he will be sorely missed! I just pray that his family and close ones can find comfort in this time of distress!

Really sad.

Marles Martins, Table Tennis Canada

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It's devastating news. George was a mentor to me, taught me how to coach, and taught me life. He will be remembered...

Jiayun Du, Coach & Friend

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Hi Ron, I just saw your message on the MTTA website about George, I am so sorry to hear this. I was a table tennis player on team Manitoba with him as coach in 2007 and 2008. I will always remember his smile and laugh and his dedication to making the sport mean so much to me and the rest of the team. I can still hear his voice, "come on guys!" urging us on from the sidelines during Nationals, or just every-day practice. Sending my thoughts to everyone who knew him, he will be greatly missed.

Sheila Mogg, Player

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It is sad that George pass away and particularly sad as it was related to Covid. This pandemic has affected all of us in many different ways and we sure hope this situation is over soon.

Yes, we remembered how we first met George in the fall of 2009. Jeremy and Naomi were at Crescent Wood Community playing table tennis with Jia Jia. George came the club one day and saw they were playing and he said to us that he believed our kids were good athletes for table tennis and invited them to be trained by MTTA. And that s how our whole family got started with table tennis and MTTA.

Our family remembered George as a delicate professional coach who had a way to motivate kids. I remembered that he would play with young players by sitting on a chair instead of free standing to give the kids some motivation to beat him. Outside table tennis he did other stuff like playing soccer and games with kids etc. He taught our children not just physical and mental developments of table tennis skills, but many life skills such as being a good character with working hard, commitment, setting and meeting goals, and team work etc. We truly thank him and truly glad we had met him in our life.

We will certainly miss George very much.

Norman Tran,

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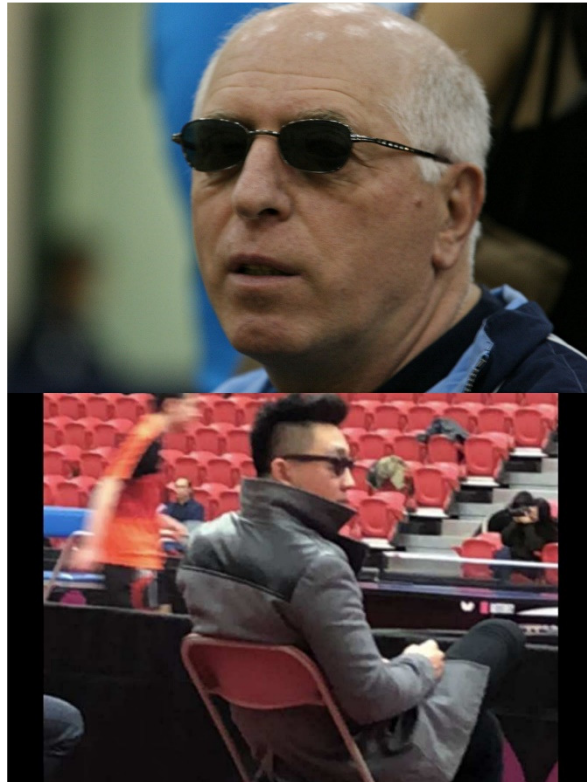
We first met George when Matthew was invited to watch a tournament at Daniel Mac. George chased us up the stairs as we were leaving, to continue to recruit Matthew to train with the 'Hopes' program. Getting to know George at Daniel Mac, Laura Secord, national championships all over Canada, Big Bang and other tournaments are all times that we will fondly remember. George always had story to tell, and a Bulgarian 'proverb' to make a point.

As parents, you hope that your child is surrounded by positive role models - and we are so grateful for George's positive influence on Matthew during his time here.

We send our condolences to George's family and friends in Bulgaria. George leaves the legacy of a 'life well lived.'

Mark and Diane Lehmann

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"Like father, like son," Terry Tian Zhang Player (and coach)

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