

## andro Newsletter March, 1 - 2007

### Table tennis players, andro customers, fans of the fastest sport on earth!

Champions League, Pro Tour and Europe Top 12: with full speed table tennis has started into the year 2007- and at each top-event the members of the andro ProTeam belonged to the main actors. We go back and follow the way of our pros during the first tournaments in the WTTT-year. For the first time Slobodan Grujic was wearing our colours. In the interview with Serbia's top-player, he explains the reasons for his change to his new equipment sponsor and he points out the importance of the European Championships in Belgrade for himself and his whole country. Furthermore Slobodan Grujic speaks about his future plans regarding his table tennis career.

Because of his contract extension at Germany's most successful club Borussia Duesseldorf until 2009, a mid-term planning is now also possible for Christian Suess. This newsletter presents the goals with his club aiming to belong to Europe's leading teams for the coming season.

Furthermore, the speed glue ban is a topic for fans all over the world. In our regular column concerning current questions about the planned ban for September 2008, we report about the estimated measurement tool "enez" and its method.

In a detailed interview, Konrad Tiefenbacher from "Wassing Messtechnik" (measurement), which has developed "enez", comments on questions regarding the reliability and importance of "enez" for a successful realisation of the speed glue ban.

We hope the new issue of the andro Newsletter will be a interesting reading for you and we wish you a lot of fun.

Your andro Team

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### ProTour tournaments 2007 – andro ProTeam collects double-medals and earns respect

The winter tournaments of the ProTour were very positive for the andro ProTeam even without single-medals. On the way to the European Championships in Belgrade (25th of March to 1st of April) and the World Championships in Zagreb (21st of May to the 27th of May) the stars of the Yellow-Blacks reached important results and created furore. Very often the ProTeam members had to surrender to Asia's aces from China's World Champion team or other absolute world class players.

From their journeys, two andro-partners brought noble metal home. The new combination Jörg Roskopf and Vice-Worldchampion Christian Suess reached the final at the dignified cast Qatar Open and won

the silver-medal. The year before Christian Suess already won that medal together with his double-partner Timo Boll in Doha. At the Slovenia Open, Slobodan Grujic started for the second time in the andro jersey and he directly won the bronze medal together with his partner Aleksandar Karakasevic, after an injury of Karakasevic, which stopped a possible bigger success in the semi-final. In the single-competition the females could reached the best results. Remarkable in particular was Wu Jiaduo moving forward until the quarter-finals of the European Top 12 and Elke Wosik who reached the round of the last 16 at the "Mini-WTT" in Doha. At the men singles the andro trio was not quite as successful. At his 18th participation at the European Top 12, Jean-Michel Saive could not overcome his primary-group and at the ProTour Croatian Open the Belgian idol had to congratulate World Champion and World Ranking No. 2 player Wang Liqin in the 2nd round and double Vice Olympic Champion Chen Qi in the same round at the Qatar Open. At the Kuwait Open Christian Suess lost in the second round against the former Youth World Champion and later tournament champion Ma Long as well as a few days before at the Qatar Open in the first round. Slobodan Grujic missed out the last sixteen in Slovenia against Jiang Tjanyi and in Qatar he lost against former WTT-ronze Champion Michael Maze. The most impressive was the



success of Christian Suess and Jörg Roßkopf in the double-competition.

But the success in Doha was not a big surprise, because already in Croatia one could see the high potential of the new formation when they beat the Chinese top-double Wang Liqin and Chen Qi.

In Zagreb, the location of the upcoming WTT, Suess and his partner had to surrender to the Koreans Lee Jung-Woo / Cho Eun-Rae with 3:4 at the quarter-finals as well as a few weeks later at the final of the Qatar Open in Doha. Since the victory of the silver medal in Doha, the experiment of the "across-the-generation" double shows that it is a very good alternative in the German National Team for the

Olympic Games 2008 in Peking. Regardless of the promising harmony with Roßkopf, Suess will hunt for medals with his partner Timo Boll at the European Championships In Belgrade and a few weeks later in Zagreb at the World Championships.

## andro-star Christian Suess until 2009 in Duesseldorf

This summer a new part of the career of Christian Suess is about to start. After the extension of his contract with Borussia Duesseldorf the Vice-World Champion doubles from Shanghai wants to help his club's so-called new "Dream Team" to meet the expectations for success. "I have big hopes in connection to the new contract. I want to win as many titles as possible and our chances in the near future are not bad." "Much better" would possibly be a better description, because already in the next season, the No. 1 of Germany's most popular club can build up some hopes for the German Championship and



also for the ETTU-Cup. Due to the fact of the signed contracts with the former world No. 1 Timo Boll and Germany's young-star Dimitrij Ovtcharov, the team's ambitions - also internationally, namely Champions League - are almost an obligation from the upcoming season. "With Boll, Jun Mizutani, Petr Korbel, Ovtcharov und me we will certainly build a very, very strong team." But Christian is also very aware of the challenges of such a long season like the next one. „Titles won't be a given. Especially in the next season it will be really hard with many matches and tournaments and Olympia 2008 as late season highlight.“ Right after the finalisation of the team set-up Duesseldorf's management announced the introduction of a regular rotation - leaving also Suess the opportunity for necessary training and regeneration periods in preparation for the Olympic Games.

These circumstances combined with the successful ambitions of the team can be regarded as the deciding factor for Christian's prolongation with Duesseldorf. Beyond this other facts influenced the decision. "The whole package is just perfect. Besides the financial aspect the playing conditions are very important. And I think that there is no other place offering better prerequisites for me. For my development Duesseldorf is just ideal and therefore first choice: coaches, training partners, management and much more. Las but not least I feel very comfortable in Duesseldorf and enjoy working here."

A soft factor for returning other offers the geographical situation to his Westfalian hometown and the proximity to his parents who have taken over their son's management at the beginning of the year can be seen: „Duesseldorf is my personal home but I am also very close to my original hometown. You do not give this up so easily. To do this the offer would need to be extremely strong.“ The dimensions of such an offer are difficult to guess and overall the prerequisites for an era of success is not everywhere as strong as in Duesseldorf.

## Slobodan Grujic: Belgrade is important - for me and my country

**Slobodan, first of all welcome in andro's ProTeam. Please give us your feedback regarding the co-operation with your new equipment supplier after a few weeks time.**

I am highly pleased with everything. I am aware of the fact that such answers are given quite often regarding their sponsors and equipment suppliers like andro, but in my case it's really true and that's the reason why I don't want to keep it as a secret.

**It is not usual that players of your level change their equipment supplier. How did you come to this decision?**

I got in touch with andro through my friend Sasa Panic, who is the official andro representative in Serbia and the Balkan-countries. He asked me, if I would like to join the andro ProTeam. Without any problems, I could imagine to play for andro because after 20 years with the same supplier, andro is a new challenge for me. Furthermore andro is well known as a very trustworthy company, which concentrates on a fistful international top-players. Without more detailed information, I could act on the assumption to have an intensive co-operation with andro. Having showed my interest to Sasa, I directly got a fair offer that I really appreciated to take.

**How long is the running time of your contract?**

Three years with the option of one additional year. That means, the contract can go on until the estimated end of my active career.



**You spoke about the intensive co-operation with andro. What does that exactly mean?**

First of all we had to find the right blade for me. You can imagine that this was not so easy after 20 years of playing with the equipment of another supplier. Anyway, andro was a big help for me and during the whole progress we were in a close relation to find the perfect blade for me. At the end, we reached a very good result and now there is a lot of space for my involvement in the development of material.

**How does that work?**

andro is very interested in the feedback about blades and rubbers from its ProTeam players because they have logically a lot of experiences and also the highest demand for the products. Therefore we speak a lot about the materials and because of that we have a very close relation.

**You have already mentioned the planning of your career. At the end of 2006 you have prolonged your contract with your club TTV Goennern until 2009. Do you want to terminate your career in Goennern?**

I will play the next two years there. Of course I would like to end my career in Goennern because I am feeling very comfortable there and I hope to keep my level until 2011. But, as you know, there are always two parties involved in a contract, so one has to wait, what kind of ambitions and opportunities are offered by Goennern.

**During the last two years you won the European Champions League with Goennern and also this year you reached the semi-final. In summer, Timo Boll will go to Borussia Duesseldorf. Is it possible for you and the team to keep your level or will your goals change?**

Of course, without Timo our goals will be smaller because a top-player as Timo is practically not exchangeable. Especially the first year will be hard, although we are already qualified for the Champions League. At this stage we are focused on building up the perfect "Team" and to fulfil the new concept of our coach and management.

**Goennern is still in a good position in this current Champions League season. In the first leg you lost 2:3 only one set down to RV Charleroi, where your andro team mate Jean-Michel Saive plays. Because of the last two final defeats Charleroi is looking for revenge, that circumstances give you a good chance for the second leg, right?**

Yes, that's also a good point of view.

**Do you have a different point of view?**

Well, the 2:3 is not bad, anyhow it was possible for us to compensate the two defeats of the first leg in both Champion League finals. Otherwise we also had the big chance to win the match 3:1, when Timo missed seven matchpoints in a row against Vladimir Samsonov. That happens to a player like Timo usually only once in a lifetime, but it happened and so we should not regret that chance. It seems to be the best to search only for the positive and that is the very close result.

**In the German Bundesliga, your distance to a Play-Off-rank is much bigger. Do you still believe in Goennern's Play-Off participation?**

That's not a question of belief, but rather a question of circumstances. Everybody knows that we will only play once or maybe twice with our number one in the Bundesliga, but there are still very difficult games left. Because of that it will be very hard for us. So, we have focused our concentration mainly on the Champions League. I think, our chances here are much higher.

**Shortly after the decisive Champions League semi-final against Charleroi, the European Championships will take place in Belgrade. Are the title bouts something special for you in your country?**

Of course, the EC in Serbia is very important for me. To play such an important tournament at home is great. I am glad that the European Championships in Belgrade are in a period of time, where I am still playing my best table tennis and I will do my best to reach a medal. But, the EC are not only important for me, it also counts for my whole country.

## How is the current situation of table tennis in Serbia?

It is nearly the same than in the whole country: difficult. Most of the hopes are built up on Aleksandar Karakasevic and me, but behind us there is a break. Not many young, good players exist, even though we got a bigger budget for training arrangements because of the EC. I hope that the European Championships can change this difficult situation. One or two medals would be also important, because table tennis was a big sport in former Yugoslavia and it should get its chance again.

## At the beginning of this interview, you spoke about your future plans as an active player. Does the participation at the Olympic Games 2008 also belong to your future plans?

Of course! Belgrade is the big goal for me and directly behind my focus is on the Olympic Games 2008 - even there are the World Championships in Zagreb. I will try my best to be a participant in Beijing. After that I will think about how many international matches I will still play.

## Have you already thought about your time after your professional career?

Sure, even when it hopefully still takes four years until that point. The thought about time was also a reason why I switched to andro because I can see my best chances here. I can easily imagine to do something for andro also after my time as a active player. But as already mentioned: first of all I am just thinking about Belgrade and Olympia.

## Player Portrait

**Name:** Slobodan Grujic  
**Birthday:** 24th of August 1973  
**Nationality:** Serbian  
**Height:** 179 cm  
**Weight:** 77kg  
**Nickname:** Bobo  
**Club membership:** TTV Goennern



## Which material are you using (rubbers/blade)?

andro Super Core Carbon, andro Revolution COR max (both sides)

**Success Story:** European Youth and Cadet Champion 1987 and 1991  
4 x Yugoslavian Champion  
3rd place European Championships team 1990  
vice-European Champion Men's Doubles 1992 and 2003  
2 x Winner of the European Champions League with Goennern 2005 and 2006

**Career highlight:** I won against Vladimir Samsonov in the Champions League Final 2005

**Life attitude:** You are, what you think!

**Hobbies:** reading, fishing, boating

## How did you start to play table tennis?

First, I played soccer. When I was nine years old, I broke my arm and after that I was more and more in the table tennis hall and started to play table tennis. My father is a former national-player and coach and so he had big influence on me.

## What is the fascination about table tennis?

Fast decisions and reactions.

## What is your tip for successful training?

Do every day your best to become better. Practise with passion

## Speed gluing series, part 7 - „enez“ the keeper of future speed glue ban

The speed glue ban, starting no later than September 2008, is not only resounded throughout the land because of the new technologies of rubbers. For a strong support of the ban of harmful organic solvents in the so far common glues, an improved inspection is essential. Therefore the development of a common and affordable inspection tool within ITTF's timetable for the speed glue ban was the significant challenge.

After two years of work, the German specialised company "Wassing Messtechnik" (measurement technique) has finished its development successfully. "enez" is the name of the world-wide keeper of the future speed gluing ban and it is proven as very reliable. The easy-to-handle container should become standard-equipment for organisers and referees at club-matches and tournaments.

The operation-principle is quite complicated from a scientifically view, but it is very easy to handle in a normal course of life. Before every match the racket has to be put into the measuring box. After closing the container hermetically the one-minute measurement of harmful organic solvents starts. At the end of the measurement the inspection tool gives a confirmation for the racket with a green light for the match - or the racket is categorised as not approved (red light) and is not allowed for competition use. Regarding the critical value, sufficient tolerances are well considered, i.e. an extension of the allowed quantity of organic solvents is attributed to the use of restricted glue. A residue of vapours, based on a former measurement is impossible because of an integrated self-cleaning system until the next measurement is made.

More details at [www.enez.de](http://www.enez.de)

## Interview with Konrad Tiefenbacher (enez)

Cause of an area-wide inspection speed glue is useless

**Konrad Tiefenbacher, the maturity phase of your inspection tool for an objective evidence of harmful organic solvents means a milestone in the realisation of the speed glue ban from the beginning of September 1st 2008. For many laymen, the topic seems to be very complicated, so let's start easy: What does the name of the measuring apparatus mean?**

"enez" is an compound word, which contains the word "electronic" and the French word "nez" for nose. As you like, "enez" therefore means "electronic nose". The pronunciation of the name of the inspection tool is like the German women name "Ines".

**That sounds very fancy. In future, the job of your "good nose" is, to find out, if someone has used glue with harmful organic solvents. How does that work?**

A measurement technique which quantifies air pollution is integrated and it directly records and analyses these facts during the investigation period. The racket has to be put in the container and then a one-minute measurement of the air pollution starts. The container searches for a variation in the air on the strengths of escaping vapours of organic solvents. Because of scientifically based critical values, showing absurd and rational non explainable levels, a report about the permissibility of a racket is the result. Does a racket pass the investigation, a green light is shining on the display or if a racket is categorised as not approved and is not allowed for competition use a red light will appear on the display.

**One minute – is that long enough?**

Yes, that's enough. One does not have to wait until the saturation level is reached, which could take hours.

**What does it mean?**

Imagine, we would take a fresh bottle of spirit filled to half. Therein it would be also possible to analyse. The corresponding vapours occur on top of the liquid in the bottle quite fast until the vapour is saturated. After one minute of investigation, vapours would still escape, but more and more slowly. This depends on the vapour pressure of the different materials.

**How was it possible to calculate exactly one minute?**

Of course, we have checked different periods of time for a significant measurement with all on the market commercialised glues and organic solvents. In consideration of all circumstances as well as the desired simulation of practise, one minute is perfect. This minute does not disturb the ongoing tournament without any noticeable delay and provide the user with sustainable and reliable results.

**That's a good keyword for the crucial question: how reliable is "enez"?**

Very reliable - which is already confirmed by independent institutions.

**As the producer of "enez" you have to assume the reliability. On what facts do you base your trust in "enez"?**

As already mentioned, we did tests with all commercialised glues and organic solvents. In addition to that we were concentrated in all different ways of speed-gluing and the way how the players are preparing their rackets, e.g. how many layers of glue the players are using. We have standardised this method to be able to realise systematic studies during the last two years of development stage. Because of that we put a lot of reliability in the inspection device. For example, during a measurement process the air is getting mixed to avoid that potentially existing organic solvents move to the bottom of the measurement container. These vapours usually sink to the ground because they are more heavier than air. To reach a reliable result the air inside the container gets stirred.

**You already mentioned a critical value. How was it possible to find it out?**

The critical value is 50-times higher than a value, which you normally find in the underground of an indoor area and 5- to 10-times under the value that a speed-glued racket would show. This decisive difference is from a scientific point of view completely satisfactory, the differences are enormous.

**Trust is good, control is better. Following this motto, if necessary, the ITTF wants to control the results of "enez" by another apparatus. Does it mean that the result of "enez" are still not reliable?**

That connection is not right. As in a efficient legal system, there must be the opportunity to control a result by an independent institution. It can happen that a player complains about the repeated test of "enez" and the negative result. At such a stage another controlling device has to check the racket. As far as we know, ITTF plans to proceed in this matter by establishing an additional tool called "Photolonisations" apparatus at the most important tournaments. By the way the price for one such apparatus is between 8.000 – 9.000 Euro.

**Where is the difference between "enez" and the "ITTF-controller"?**

There is not a big difference, indeed the two containers are working in a different way, but the "ITTF-controller" is more complex and one can use it in all-purpose e.g. for investigations of pressure at workplace. But looking at the results of precision, dimensions of measurement are in the same order of magnitude. The high-value ITTF apparatus gets the result through an exact designation of the scientific PPM-value for a racket. But our reports could also deliver these facts

**Why does the "enez" apparatus just work with a green and a red light?**

"enez" will be much cheaper than the machine used by the ITTF as additional control device. Anyway, the players should not be lead into temptation or not have the possibility to buy one of these control

devices aiming to find out where the critical value of "enez" is. We could of course show all of our facts in public, but the fewer potential cheaters know details about it, the more difficult it is to manipulate our machine.

**You have already mentioned the purchase costs. Do you have more detailed information regarding the estimated price of "enez"?**

Our calculations are based on an agreement with the ITTF that a control of the speed glue ban should be realised on all levels. Of course, the price is a significant fact. That means: the tool should be affordable for everyone and every club. Therefore the price is focussed on a possibly wide distribution of the machine and not on a high profit for our company.



Picture Prototyp „enez“

**Is it possible to specify that parameter?**

In Germany the estimated price will be in the range under 300 Euro. In consideration of all facts, e.g. tax or similar matters one can say that the international price for "enez" will be approximately half of the price of a high quality competition table.

**What was the reason for your company to start with the development of "enez"?**

Since the beginning of the 90ies "Wassing Messtechnik" is developing many different measurement systems in different sports. For example, our work supports also regulations in the international soccer and tennis scene. When we got the information about the resolution from the ITTF at the World Championships 2004 in Doha, we started on our own initiative with the development of finding solutions for the existing problems of controlling. Then we contacted the ITTF to discuss the further harmonisation of the development. Since the World Championships in Bremen 2006, the ITTF owns a few prototypes of "enez" and we are in a close dialog to get feedback about their own tests. Of course, we are very interested in the results because we want that "enez" works also in reality and not only in laboratory.

**Within the ITTF there allegedly is also a discussion about bringing the speed glue ban forward to its original timing of 1st September 2007. Would "enez" be prepared?**

We think so. We are now looking for the final references from Japan, where the speed glue ban for children will be also controlled by "enez" - starting already in April 2007. There we will have our first small case of emergency. The information, which we receive from Japan will be extremely important for us. Nothing is as perfect as it could be not developed further.

**In case the references from Japan are positive and the speed glue ban will start already at the 1st of September 2007: Would you also be prepared to handle the estimated demand for "enez"?**

Entering the market was always planned for the end of 2007. I can't give you a guarantee now, if we are already prepared in September. On the other hand, our production process is focused on the case, that we can produce many machines in a very short period of time.

**But you can already start to pre-produce in case the speed glue ban starts earlier?**

We don't start production without a real reason and we are putting no pressure on the associations to buy our machine. "enez" will be a business which is basically build upon just-in-time delivery. We are quite flexible and independent in the way of production.

**From your external point of view, which importance will "enez" have for table tennis and for a successful realisation of the speed glue ban?**

I guess an exchange between the controls and the affections to the players will be possible. An area-

wide inspection makes speed gluing useless. Due to that fact it is very important how the associations handle the ban and make use of the controlling devices. If "enez" will be used widely right from the beginning, it will be very difficult for players, who are hoping to find gaps in the controlling-system - so they will stop gluing. In my opinion, the glue ban for using glue inside a hall or a changing room is also not strictly enough forbidden and a lot of players are still gluing in the changing rooms. If the speed glue ban will be just a written document without binding controls, then players especially in the lower leagues will be not be taking the speed glue ban seriously.

## andro PLASMA Women

The outstandingly successful PLASMA series is extended by another top product.

What is normal in other sports since years is now finally happening in table tennis: For the first time in the history of table tennis a European brand has created a high performance rubber for the specific needs of female players. This product is pointing out the significance of women's table tennis for our sports – the individuality is underlined by the women characteristic.

The andro PLASMA WOMEN particularly incorporates the features that stand for modern women's table tennis.



This rubber will easily send the ball exactly to its target! Due to the higher ball flying curve the PLASMA WOMEN provides an increased level of tolerance. Thus the female player has a bigger success range for her strokes compared to conventional rubbers. Even if not practising intensively the rubber can be controlled without difficulty. The PLASMA WOMEN reacts very well and releases a lot of spin already in slow top spins. For hitting fast top spins a high level of acceleration is no more necessary.

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**Speed 93 - Spin 103 - Control 93**

### KEY FACTS

- Higher ball flying curve for more tolerance
- Bigger hitting accuracy
- Lower weight means better handling
- Spin and speed without high acceleration
- BIOS TENSOR for ITTF-compliant speed gluing effect

## andro new official DTTB ball supplier including German Open

With the start of the upcoming season andro will be the official sponsor for balls of the German table tennis federation (DTTB). Hence the andro speedball will be flying at all official DTTB tournaments like German Championships, German Youth Championships, etc. The co-operation is based on a three year agreement until middle of 2010.

The LIEBHERR German Open as well will be played with andro balls in 2007/2008/2009. This year, the German Open will be taking place in Bremen from November 7th to November 11th.



## **Jean-Mi becomes Europe-Top-12 record holder**

Jean-Michel Saive has set yet another record for the table tennis history books when he played at the Europe Top 12 tournament in Arezzo, Italy this February. It was the 18th participation of the Belgian in this tournament. Never before a top player was able to proof such permanence before. Even though Swedish idol Jan-Ove Waldner has played the Top 12 event 18 times as well – he did not do it in a row like Jean-Mi. For Saive this record however did not mean good luck: the 37-year-old man from Royal Vilette Charleroi was not able to prevail over former world champion Werner Schlager and his Russian club colleague Alexei Smirnov in the pre-round. Nevertheless: andro congratulates Jean-Michel Saive who back in 1990 in Hannover/Germany started the continuous row of participation into the European elite event. Let's go for it in 2008!

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