

HAYATA, Hina 早田ひな

The Development Story Behind the H2

"Still in Use, Chosen for Now"

Mima Ito&G-1

Why Does Masataka Morizono
Use Hamond Z2?

GENEXION Generation

THE BALL

A Legacy of Excellence,
3-Star Premium Clean



ハヤタ・ヒナ
&N

Nittaku®

#1

HINA HAYATA 早田ひな

“When I start talking about rackets, I can’t stop”



Genius of hard work, Hina Hayata & Hina Hayata H2

The Development Story Behind the H2: Stability Sought by a Hard-Working Champion

‘When I start talking about rackets, I can’t stop - I could easily talk for an hour straight.’

Hina Hayata describes herself as ‘someone incredibly meticulous about details, even among table tennis players.’ This attention to detail is evident in every aspect of her Hina Hayata H2 model, which took nearly two years to develop.

‘The first thing players might notice about my racket is that it doesn’t seem to generate much speed,’ Hayata explains. This deliberate characteristic of stability reflects her pursuit of precision in her on-table techniques - an increasingly crucial factor at elite levels - while still maintaining her world-class power. Rather than opting for a hard, bouncy blade, she sought one offering soft, nuanced feedback. Working closely with Nittaku through countless prototypes and testing sessions, they gradually approached her ideal blade over a two-year development period.

‘I’m not naturally gifted when it comes to ball touch and feel, so I’ve had to invest time to learn techniques. When I use a hard and bouncy racket, it’s hard to tell whether a mistake is due to technique or equipment.’

Even for young players in elementary or junior high school who are serious about improving, I strongly recommend using a softer racket that emphasizes stability. Softer rackets

also offer a wider range of shot options, so there is a sense of accomplishment and joy when you execute the perfect shot.’

The Hina Hayata H2’s blade is slightly larger than Nittaku’s standard size (157mm x 150mm), measuring 158mm x 152mm. This expanded sweet spot represents another aspect of Hayata’s commitment to consistent, high-quality ball striking. The grip features a slightly flatter, thinner profile for secure and firm handling, essential for generating power with a softer blade.

Released on July 7, 2022 - Hayata’s 22nd birthday - the H2 isn’t designed as a quick fix for instant improvement. As she puts it, ‘I’d recommend this racket to players who want to perfect their techniques step by step.’ It’s a reliable partner for those willing to put in the work, develop their skills methodically, and deliver consistently in pressure situations.



Hina Hayata H2



‘My hands aren’t particularly large,’ notes Hayata, explaining how the blade’s slightly flattened, narrow grip provides optimal palm fit and secure handling control.



HINA HAYATA
2021 Asian Championships winner, bronze medalist at the 2023 World Table Tennis Championships, 2024 Paris Olympics team silver and singles bronze medalist, and three-time All Japan Championship winner.

Hina Hayata H2

The Hina Hayata H2 isn't just a signature model - it's Hayata's personal choice for competition. Its combination of powerful drives and precise touch control has impressed audiences worldwide.



‘This is the perfect racket for players committed to methodically developing their technique,’ she explains.



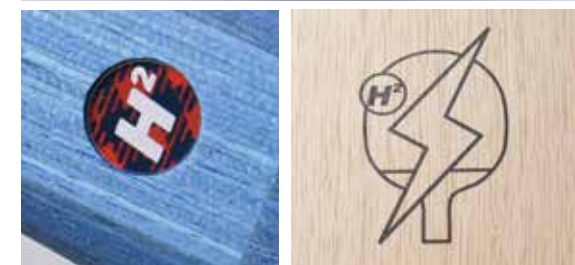
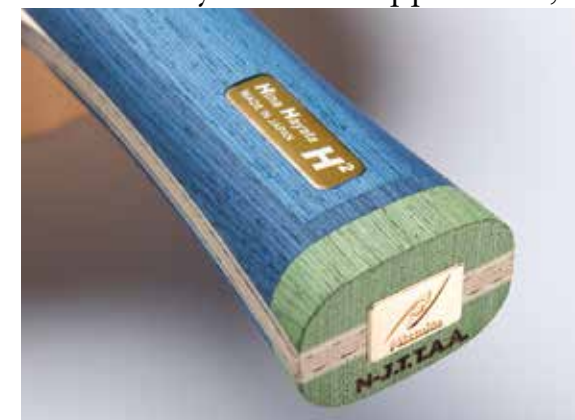
The blade's advanced PKC (Precision Kinetic Core) technology, integrated within the inner core, delivers an exceptional balance of power and touch sensitivity. At 5.8mm thick, it provides optimal performance characteristics for both aggressive and controlled play.

‘I wanted this racket to reflect my gratitude to everyone who supports me,’



The design process focused equally on performance and aesthetics. The grip features a meaningful color scheme: blue (her favorite) combined with purple and yellow-green (her coach and trainer's preferences), symbolizing their unified competitive spirit.

The H2 designation on the grip features the distinctive red check pattern of her team, the Nippon Life Insurance Red Elfs. ‘I incorporated my gratitude to everyone who supports me into the design,’ Hayata explains.



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Gold accents on the lens and grip end reflect championship aspirations, while the H2 marking on the grip's reverse provides a subtle design element. The lightning motif, personally designed by Hayata, represents her unique combination of cuteness and strength.

Answering the call for a truly world-class competitive blade, the development team produced and tested over 500 prototypes before achieving the final design.

General Manager
of Product
Development,
Nittaku

Junichi Matsui

Development of the Hina Hayata H2 began with a clear vision: creating a blade worthy of international competition. Hayata's initial request was for a slightly larger blade size, and testing began with a basic FE Carbon plywood structure.

Through extensive development and testing, the team refined the design to incorporate Kevlar® Carbon construction with precision-tuned PKC technology for enhanced repulsion characteristics. Given Hayata's exacting standards for grip comfort, we produced multiple

prototypes with grip dimensions varying by just 0.1mm until we achieved her ideal specifications.

The H2's success has extended far beyond its original design brief - Hayata's powerful driving style has attracted interest from male Nittaku-contracted players eager to try the blade. The technological innovations developed for the H2 have influenced our broader product line, particularly the Gyoen and Soten series designed for aggressive players. This has significantly expanded Nittaku's presence among top-tier male competitors.

“Natural spin variation and smashing power”



Mima Ito continues to use Fastarc G-1, a rubber that has been on the market for over 10 years. Her horizontal smash swings are devastatingly powerful, complementing her skillful rotating drives and varied serves. During the 2021 Tokyo Olympics, Ito clinched critical matches with powerful service aces - winning the mixed doubles against Germany 15-14 and sealing the final against China at 10-6. Ito, who has dominated with her dual mastery of “spin” and “smash”, is notoriously particular about her equipment. Though her table tennis style is versatile and adaptable, her trust in her chosen rubber remains absolute. This is her unique, irreplaceable rubber - and she’s rarely discussed her specific preferences until now.



Mima Ito & Fastarc G-1
Her partner, One and Only

The World’s Top Player Discusses Her Equipment Mima Ito and “G-1”



#2

MIMA ITO
伊藤美誠

Mima Ito
2021 Tokyo Olympics: Mixed Doubles Gold, Team Silver,
Singles Bronze
Three-time All Japan Champion
Current Affiliation: Starts

“Since I started using G-1 in November 2011, I’ve briefly experimented with other rubbers - including a Chinese rubber from Double Happiness - but I always return to G-1. When I try other rubbers, it’s mainly to understand their differences, not to replace my preferred rubber.

With most rubbers, spinning is straightforward - you spin, the ball spins; you don’t spin, the ball stays flat. But G-1 is different. The ball creates unexpected changes that can force my opponent into errors. It’s challenging to control precisely, but that unpredictability is its greatest strength.

Since the introduction of plastic balls, many players have been looking for more spin. Rubbers emerged that would make balls fly upward, and players constantly switched equipment. I tested alternatives too, but found the balls would either climb too high or fly too far. G-1 allows me to be creative while maintaining natural ball movement.

Smashing has always been central to my game.

As a young elementary student, I focused more on quick hits and smashes than technical drives. Even as global playing styles have evolved with plastic balls, my

core strengths remain powerful smashes and varied spin techniques. G-1 complements this perfectly.

My current style balances smashes and spin techniques almost equally. But as more players adopt a spin-oriented approach, the more I deliberately want to play in a different tactical direction.

I’ve always preferred German rubbers, both for inverted and pimped surfaces. When I find equipment that works, I stick to it and I’ll use it for years.”

Mima Ito
Racket ▶ Ito Mima Carbon
Forehand ▶ Fastarc G-1
Backhand ▶ Moristo SP



Fastarc G-1

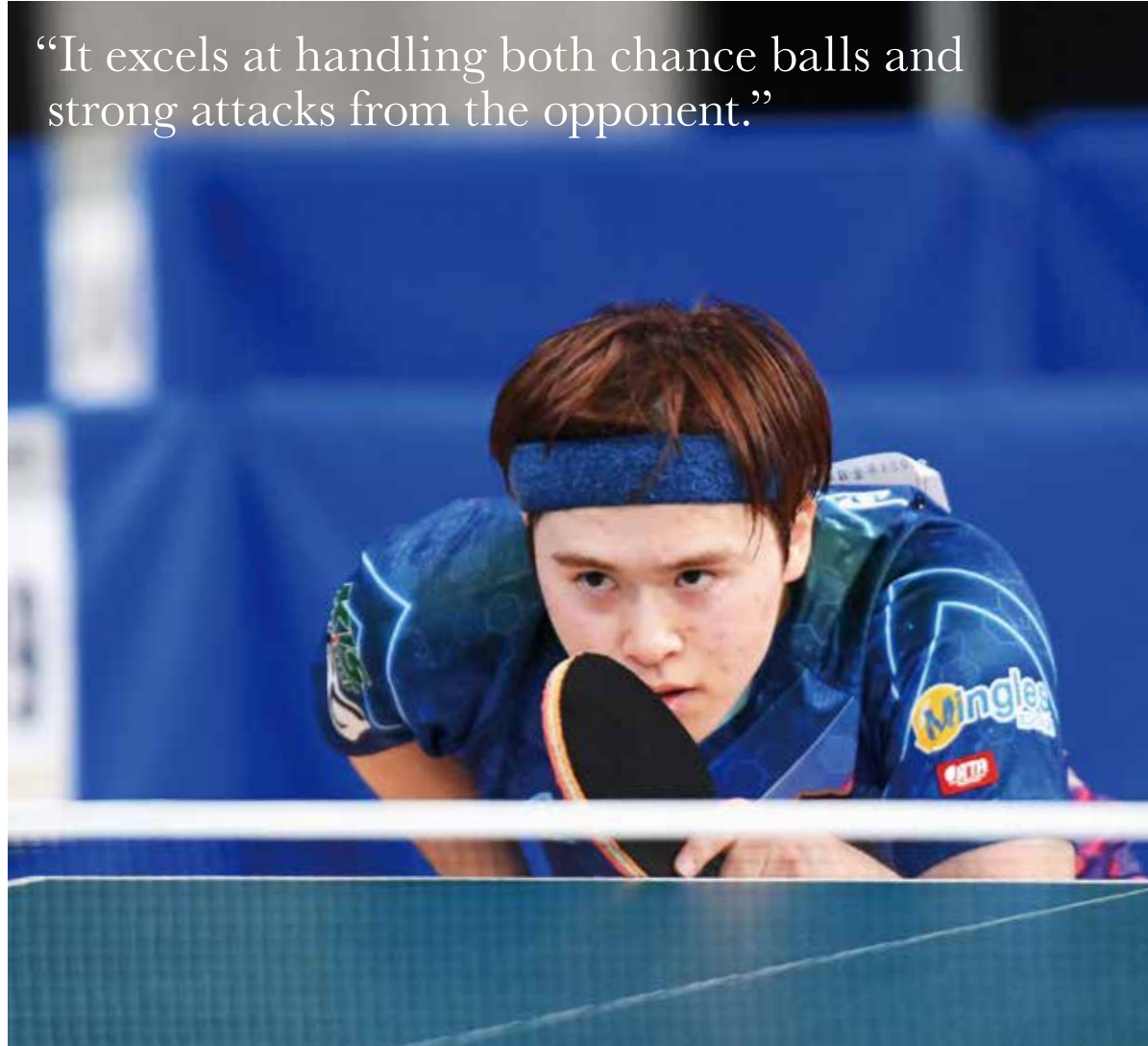


Fastarc G-1

#3

MASATAKA MORIZONO 森園政崇

“It excels at handling both chance balls and strong attacks from the opponent.”



Masataka Morizono & HAMMOND Z2
Ultimate balance

The Science Behind Morizono's Choice of the Hammond Z2



HAMMOND Z2



MASATAKA MORIZONO

Runner-up in the 2017 World Table Tennis Championship Men's Doubles, winner of three consecutive All Japan Championships Mixed Doubles titles from 2018 to 2020, runner-up in the 2021 All Japan Championships, runner-up in the 2022 All Japan Championships Men's Doubles, and winner of the 2023 All Japan Championships Men's Doubles. Currently affiliated with BOBSON and serves as both coach and player for the T-League's Shizuoka Jade.



“For my backhand, it has to be G-1.”

“The key advantage is simple: balance,” explains Masataka Morizono about his forehand rubber of choice, the Hammond Z2. “While it generates excellent spin, it’s equally effective for direct hits. My technique involves maintaining an upright racket position and adding spin through the follow-through - the Hammond Z2 perfectly complements this style.”

In Morizono’s analysis, players essentially seek two fundamental qualities in a rubber: consistency on chance balls and reliability when countering powerful attacks.

Achieving both qualities simultaneously presents a significant challenge. Harder rubbers excel at handling powerful returns but can lead to unexpected errors on easier balls. Softer rubbers offer better control on opportunity balls but tend to absorb too much energy from powerful shots, increasing the likelihood of mistakes.

“I think Hammond Z2 uniquely balances these typically conflicting requirements. It maintains exceptional consistency on chance balls while standing up to aggressive shots from opponents.

Another key feature is its trajectory control - the ball neither flies too high nor travels too straight. It produces my ideal arc. Even with heavy spin on serves and returns, it maintains controlled bounce height, offering remarkable stability and reliability.”

Among the wide variety of pimples-in rubbers, only a handful are chosen by top male players for their forehand. Players aren’t looking for exceptional performance in just one area. Instead, they need versatility - a rubber that performs consistently whether they’re playing close to the table or from the back of the court. This truly embodies the concept of “ultimate balance.”



HAMMOND Z2

#8 3-STAR PREMIUM CLEAN

Selected as the official ball for the 2025 All Japan Championships
3-Star Premium Clean, A Legacy of Excellence



NITTAKU'S PASSION FOR MAKING BALLS. A CENTURY OF JAPANESE CRAFTSMANSHIP The 100-Year Legacy of Japanese-Made Table Tennis Balls

The Nittaku story begins with ball manufacturing. In 1920., Kanichi Mukohara established 'Harter Shokai' to process celluloid. His venture into celluloid ball manufacturing would lay the foundation for a century of innovation.

Post-war, in 1947, Nippon Takkyu Co., Ltd. (Nittaku) was established as a specialized table tennis manufacturer. Though initially trailing competitors, the quality of their products gradually earned recognition, and balls bearing the 'Nittaku' trademark gained popularity throughout Japan.

A pivotal moment came at the 1971 World Championships in Nagoya. Nittaku's 3-star balls became the first Japanese-manufactured balls selected for this prestigious event. This breakthrough established Nittaku's global reputation for quality, expanding their market presence internationally. Since then, Nittaku balls have been the choice for numerous major tournaments, including World Championships.

The industry has faced two significant transitions since Nittaku began production: the 2000 size change (38mm to 40mm) and the switch in material from celluloid to plastic in 2014. The plastic ball transition proved particularly challenging, requiring entirely new manufacturing processes. While many domestic manufacturers opted to outsource production to Chinese factories with advanced R&D capabilities, Nittaku remained committed to domestic production.

Through this transition, Nittaku persevered with Japanese

manufacturing, leveraging their refined technology and expertise. After extensive trial and error, they successfully developed a high-quality plastic ball produced entirely in Japan. Despite rule changes, their commitment to quality never wavered.

Nittaku also played a crucial role in developing the large ball in the late 1980s. This experience with manufacturing technically challenging balls proved invaluable when adapting to both the size change and plastic ball production. In 2020, their centennial year, as COVID-19 struck the globe, Nittaku rapidly developed balls incorporating antibacterial agents. They later enhanced these with antiviral properties, leading to the 2022 release of the internationally approved '3-Star Premium Clean'. Even during global uncertainty, Nittaku continued innovating to ensure player safety and confidence. The 3-Star Premium Clean has been selected as the official ball for the 2025 All Japan Championships in January and February.

Nittaku's dedication to domestic ball production spans over 100 years. As Japan's sole remaining ball manufacturer, their passion for quality is evident in every ball they produce. Each undergoes rigorous optical inspection for seam quality and surface perfection, maintaining uncompromising manufacturing standards for both domestic and international markets."



Original Nittaku balls (circa 1960s) established the foundation for today's quality standards.



State-of-the-art optical inspection systems meticulously examine each ball's seams and surface quality. Through this uncompromising quality control process, Nittaku delivers premium competition-grade balls to players worldwide.

3-Star Premium Clean