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ALL INTERNATIONAL
TABLE TENNIS NEWS

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EVENT OF THE MONTH

MA LONG

WORLD NUMBER ONE,
NOW CHAMPION
OF THE WORLD

P.06

450 MILLION PEOPLE
FOLLOWED THE
WORLD-S BIGGEST
TABLE TENNIS EVENT

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IN SHORT

DING NING
REGAINS TITLE IN
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Ma Long

The Champion of 2015 SuZhou W.T.T.C in 40+ ages

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WELCOME TO OUR OFFICIAL PING MAGAZINE, ONE WHICH VISITS THE FOUR CORNERS OF THE WORLD.

Read about what happened in the world of table tennis since our last issue.

Understandably, all eyes were focused on China for the Qoros 2015 World Championship. At our showpiece event, we wondered who would make history.

Would **Ma Long** respond and win the Men's Singles title? Would he fulfil his goal? Would the World number one complete the tournament with the gold medal around his neck?

He did, combining power and control, he realised his dream; the quality of his play setting new standards.

Throughout **Ma Long** was totally focused, mentally attuned but if any player showed strength of character it was **Ding Ning**. She secured the Women's Singles title despite being in pain and restricted in movement as a result of an ankle injury sustained at the start of the deciding seventh game.

It was one of the most courageous performances ever witnessed and like **Ma Long**, she proved herself most worthy being rated the best player in the World.

Enthralling action in Suzhou, reaching an estimated 450 million people worldwide, the tournament set a record as the most followed in the history of table tennis.

Notably 330 million unique viewers watched the telecast in 170 countries across the world. The result of the extensive coverage is that the International Table Tennis Federation has become the third International Federation to hit 1,000,000 social media fans; furthermore, the number of Facebook fans has reached 200,000, the YouTube views a staggering 55 million.

A healthy situation, enjoy the sport for all, enjoy table tennis.
Philippe Saive

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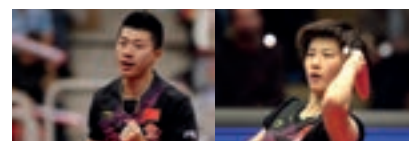
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FULL FRAME

2015 WORLD TABLE TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS BECOMES MOST FOLLOWED TABLE TENNIS EVENT IN HISTORY

The Qoros 2015 ITTF World Table Tennis Championships held in Suzhou, China on 26 April - 3 May 2015 has been officially announced as the most followed table tennis event in history.

The world's biggest table tennis event was followed by an estimated 450 million people across the globe, which is a record for a table tennis event. 330 million unique people watched the event on their TV's in 170 countries across the world. In China alone, 252 million tuned into the ITTF World Championships, which means that 1 in 5 people in China watched the event on TV during the 50 hours of live coverage on CCTV-5 and 150 hours of coverage on other Chinese networks.



GAC GROUP 2015 ITTF WORLD TABLE TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS, SUZHOU



GAC GROUP 2015 ITTF WORLD TABLE TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS, SUZHOU

MA LONG, WORLD NUMBER ONE, NOW CHAMPION OF THE WORLD

Three times the bronze medallist; in a final full of breath-taking scintillating rallies, **Ma Long**, the top seed, won the Men's Singles title at the QOROS 2015 World Championships on the evening of Sunday 3rd May.

In a contest that kept the capacity crowd in the Suzhou International Expo Center spell-bound, **Ma Long** beat **Fang Bo**, the no.13 seed, in an all-Chinese final.

A man with a mission to prove he is currently the best player in the world, **Ma Long** emerged successful in six games (11-7, 7-11, 11-4, 11-8, 11-13, 11-4).

POINT TO PROVE

Against **Fan Zhendong** at the semi-final stage, **Ma Long** had been on fire earlier in the day. In the final, it was the very same attitude that was displayed, positive, adrenalin gushing through the body.

Ma Long had a point to prove; listed at no.1 on the Men's World Ranking list on no less than 32 of the monthly publications but never the World champion; the player who reaches the pinnacle of the rankings is respected, the player who is the champion is immortalised.

SIMILAR STYLE

In Suzhou, **Ma Long** faced an opponent who was playing at a new level, playing the best table tennis of his life in a style not

too dissimilar to that of his own; safe and consistent from the backhand, devastating and dynamic from the forehand.

The first two games were shared as the two traded blow for blow in a heavyweight forehand top spin contest; the third game went to **Ma Long** in what had become an athletic duel that captivated the crowd.

“Ma Long leapt on the table in celebration.”

SIMILAR STYLE

No quarter was asked, no quarter given; accepted that both players were from the same national association but that fact paled into insignificance as two superb athletes plied their skills. They showed table tennis to be a sport that demands high levels of fitness, balance, anticipation and mental strength.

TIME OUT LESSON

In the fourth game, there was little choice between the two gladiators with **Ma Long** having a slight advantage at 6-5; **Fang Bo**, perhaps surprisingly, called “Time Out”.

The break worked but it worked in favour of **Ma Long**, he won the next three points. **Fang Bo** won the next two points, **Ma Long** called “Time Out”.

Notably, neither had left the decision to a game which could have concluded the match. Perhaps for coaches and players worldwide, there is a lesson to be learned.

Again the break worked in favour of **Ma Long**, he went ahead 10-8, two game points, a rally, **Fang Bo** in control but a return from **Ma Long** clipped the top of the net, **Fang Bo** failed to return.



FIFTH GAME

Was that the type of luck you need to win the big final?

Luck or not, the two games cushion had given **Ma Long** the distinct advantage. Belief was growing in his mind; every success was greeted with a guttural roar.

He led 6-2, then 8-5, closer and closer but **Fang Bo** to his great credit maintained a positive approach. He reduced the arrears to one point at 8-7; then the point of the



match, fearsome top spin exchanges. The point went to **Ma Long**, the next three to **Fang Bo**; he led 10-9. **Ma Long** saved the game point and then at 11-10 held Championship point.

Now **Fang Bo** saved and then with rallies of the highest possible calibre, powerful top spin play, secured the next three points, the margin was down to one game in favour of **Ma Long**.

LEAPED ON TABLE

Notably the cries from the crowd were for **Fang Bo**, quite simply, they begged for more, scintillating sport.

A Championship point lost, **Ma Long** responded to his great credit, at 10-3 in the sixth game, he held seven Championship points; one was saved, no more. **Ma Long** leapt on the table in celebration.

The point was proven, **Ma Long**, the World no.1 was the champion of the world. The St. Bride Vase donated in 1929 was in his possession.

FOUR YEAR REIGN OVER, FAN BO BEATS ZHANG JIKE TO BOOK FINAL PLACE AT FIRST ATTEMPT

Attempting to match the record of his compatriot **Zhuang Zedong** who secured the crown on three consecutive occasions starting in 1961; **Zhang Jike**, the no.3 seed, was beaten at the semi-final stage of the Men's Singles event at the QOROS 2015 World Championships in Suzhou by Chinese National Team compatriot, **Fang Bo**, the no.13 seed.

Against all expectations and predictions, **Fang Bo** playing in the Men's Singles event at a World Championships for the very first time, secured a five games win (11-5, 11-7, 5-11, 11-9, 12-10), in a contest where an anticipated recovery never happened.

It was not one of the most dramatic duels, more one that left the crowd somewhat stunned that the player who own the Olympic Games Men's Singles title, had been beaten in such a manner.

NO SIGN OF NERVES

A first appearance in a World Championships Men's Singles semi-final but there was no hint of nerves in the play of

Fang Bo as matters commenced; moving freely, usually the first to attack, he dominated the opening game.

The errors were minimal and it was very much the same at the start of the second game; in the counter top spin department, he was the equal of **Zhang Jike**. The first game secured, the second followed not in such a commanding fashion but with a degree of comfort.

Zhang Jike was making more errors than expected when trying to control the fluent top spin play of his adversary; equally in the rallies the vote went with **Fang Bo**.

POSSIBLE RECOVERY

However, in the face of crisis, in the face of adversity, it is where **Zhang Jike** excels.

Quickly, the mind went back to the Liebherr 2011 Men's World Cup in Paris, when **Zhang Jike** lost the first two games against compatriot, **Wang Hao** and then recovered to win the next four.

More positive than in the opening two games, **Zhang Jike** secured the third but in the fourth game it was a back to the pattern of the first two; **Fang Bo** was the better player in the rallies. **Fang Bo**, against expectations, established an 8-4 lead.



TIME OUT

The next two points went to **Zhang Jike**; immediately **Fang Bo** called "Time Out".

He won the next point to lead 9-6, **Zhang Jike** reduced the arrears to one point at 9-8 but he never gained parity. At 10-8, **Fang Bo** held two game points; with a devasta-



ting dynamic forehand arrowed towards the right hip of **Zhang Jike**, the game was secured.

Fang Bo led by three games to one.

PROBLEMS CONTROLLING SPIN

Everyone anticipated a **Zhang Jike** recovery, surely he would come out all guns blazing in the fifth game but he continued to experience problems trying to control top spin play of **Fang Bo** and on occasions he erred with his forehand top spin; most unusually losing his technique.

At 7-all he called "Time Out", the next four points were shared; at 9-all it was parity; then match point to **Fang Bo**. The point was saved by at 11-10 **Fang Bo** had a second opportunity. The chance was taken; contrary to popular opinion, **Fang Bo** had booked his place in the final.

FAMILIARITY

*"I know him well, we are in the same training group I know his style, I know his strengths", said **Fang Bo**. "I had been thinking about one reaching the final and now it's happened; for sure **Ma Long** starts as the favourite but I'll give it my best."*

Earlier in the day **Ma Long** had been impressive when overcoming **Fan Zhendong**; equally **Fang Bo** had been impressive in opposition to **Zhang Jike**.

*"I think I played better than my level", added **Fang Bo**. "I think I was lucky to beat **Zhang Jike**." There was no luck; **Zhang Jike** was not at his best; conversely **Fang Bo** excelled.*

FIRST SINCE MANCHESTER

It is the first time since **Kong Linghui** was beaten by **Vladimir Samsonov** of Belarus at the 1997 World Championships, in the English city of Manchester, that the defending champion in the Men's Singles event has departed in the semi-final stage.

MA LONG BREATHES FIRE, THE DRAGON ROARS, BEATS FAN ZHENDONG TO REACH FINAL

Beaten by compatriot **Wang Hao** in the penultimate round of the Men's Singles event at the most recent three World Championships; China's **Ma Long** made no mistake on the morning of Sunday 3rd May in the city of Suzhou.

The top seed, he endorsed his billing by beating **Fan Zhendong**, the no.4 seed and likewise from China, in five games (11-1, 11-7, 11-8, 7-11, 11-5) in his semi-final encounter at the QOROS 2015 World Championships.

A man with a mission **Ma Long**, the name meaning "dragon", roared; he was too hot for **Fan Zhendong** to handle.

GOOD START

Ma Long made the best possible start; he won the first nine points of the opening game before there was a repost from **Fan Zhendong**.

In the second and third games, **Ma Long** continued to be the dominant player; true to his style of play he was safe from the backhand, devastating from the forehand.





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"I was nervous at the start of the match."

Challenged to a greater extent but successful on the vital points, **Ma Long** established three games to nil lead, in the fourth it was parity at 6-all; **Fan Zhendong** called "Time Out".

ADRENALIN FLOWED

He recovered to win the fourth game but the reverse spurred **Ma Long** to greater heights; adrenalin was flowing.

Every success, **Ma Long** greeted with a deep throated cry; the forehand was in motion and he was able, especially from the backhand to absorb the attacking play of **Fan Zhendong**.



THE MIND

Sport is played very much in the mind at the very highest level; the mind of **Ma Long** in the fifth game was ever stronger, ever more positive, the mind of **Fan Zhendong** was searching for answers.

Point by point **Ma Long** was moving nearer the goal, he was taking no chances, at 10-5 in the fifth game he decided that discretion was the better part of valour. He elected for "Time Out".

Perhaps it was not necessary but the decision proved worthwhile, he won the next point, the dragon roared.



FOUND RHYTHM

*"I took the "Time Out" because I didn't want to lose, I wanted to make sure", said **Ma Long**. "I was quick to find a rhythm to my play, I was pleased with the quality of my play and I was able to put **Fan Zhendong** under pressure; in that first game I made no mistakes."*

Furthermore, for **Ma Long** it was his first appearance in a World Championships Men's Singles semi-final but seemingly that fact was not in the mind of the 26 year old.

*"I don't think it made any difference that it was my fourth semi-final", added **Ma Long**. "I have lost to **Fan Zhendong** earlier this year so here in Suzhou it is a big challenge, it is a challenge mentally, tactically and technically; furthermore **Fan Zhendong** is in good form, you just have to look back yesterday to when he beat **Timo Boll**."*

SIMILAR SITUATION

A delighted **Ma Long** who when he was beaten by **Wang Hao** in Yokohama at the H.I.S. World Championship in 2009 was very much in the same shoes in which **Fan Zhendong** found himself in Suzhou.

*"I was nervous at the start of the match", said **Fan Zhendong**. "I wasn't able to find a good rhythm to my play at any stage of the match; maybe **Ma Long** was better prepared; certainly I'm disappointed with my performance."*

Disappointed by as was the situation with **Ma Long** in 2009, he was better for the experience.

MISSION COMPLETED, CHALLENGE FROM FOREIGN SHORES REPELLED

Four players from the host nation entered the arena at the quarter-final stage of the Men's Singles event at the QOROS 2015 World Championships in Suzhou on Saturday 2nd May.





Urged forward by their adoring fans in the city's spacious International Expo Center, all four emerged successful against foreign adversaries; it was very much mission completed.

It meant that in both the Men's Singles and Women's Singles events, at no stage in the tournament had a Chinese player suffered defeat at the hands of a visitor.

My impression was that was the clear goal prior to the commencement of proceedings; the preparation had clearly addressed every detail, to their great credit the players had responded and they had responded in style.

FAN ZHENDONG OUTSTANDING

No-one responded in a more impressive manner than **Fan Zhendong**, the no.4 seed.

After **Ma Long**, the top seed, had beaten Hong Kong's **Tang Peng**, the no.12 seed, in four straight games (11-7, 11-9, 11-6, 11-1) and **Fang Bo**, the no.13 seed, had defeated Germany's **Patrick Franziska**, the no.42 seed (11-5, 11-9, 8-11, 11-5, 11-5), **Fan Zhendong** caused Germany more pain.



He beat **Timo Boll** in six games (12-10, 11-9, 8-11, 11-7, 13-15, 11-7) on his first ever appearance in Men's Singles World Championships quarter-final. One match later, at the start of the evening session of play, **Zhang Jike**, the no.3 seed, beat Japan's **Jun Mizutani**, the no.5 seed, to complete the mission (11-4, 11-6, 10-12, 11-5, 11-9) the invaders had been repelled.

ONE MORE THAN OPPONENT

Xiao Zhan, the coach of **Zhang Jike**, had described **Fan Zhendong** as a genius, in that if his opponent put seven strokes on the table, **Fan Zhendong** would find a way to execute number eight to his advantage.

Never was that more indelibly endorsed than against **Timo Boll**, a contest of breath taking rallies that was a credit to both players.

Time and again **Fan Zhendong** found a way to put one more ball on the table; he was at the top of his game.

ADVICE FROM COLLEAGUES

*"It's the first time I'd ever played **Timo Boll**, so I was not familiar with his style", said **Fan Zhendong**. "When I knew that I had to play him I spoke to **Ma Long** and **Zhang Jike** who have played him several times before."*

The advice afforded by his colleagues and by Wu Jianping, the Chinese National Coach sitting courtside, reaped dividends.

*"I was nervous at the start but as the match progressed I played more aggressively", added **Fan Zhendong**. "I felt confident in the rallies; that was my plan."*

COMFORTABLE WINS

Success for **Fan Zhendong** came after two relatively comfortable wins for **Ma Long** and **Fang Bo** and prior to **Zhang Jike** ensuring that there would be defeat against a foreign adversary.

*"The first two games were difficult but then the third and fourth games were much more comfortable", explained **Ma Long**. "I know **Tang Peng** well; we've played many times in the past."*





GAC GROUP 2015 ITTF WORLD TABLE TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS, SUZHOU



NOW A LIVING LEGEND, INJURED DING NING REGAINS TITLE IN DRAMATIC FINAL

Crowned World champion in Rotterdam four years earlier but beaten at the semi-final stage two years ago in Paris; **Ding Ning** regained the title in a tension packed Suzhou Expo International Center on the evening of Saturday 2nd May.

The top seed, she beat compatriot, **Liu Shiwen**, the second seed in an all-Chinese final (7-11, 15-13, 11-7, 11-9, 9-11, 4-11, 11-8) in one of the most dramatic finals ever witnessed in the now almost 90 year history of the tournament.

NO BONES BROKEN

Trailing by two points to nil in the vital seventh game she fell, turned her ankle; before after an extended break, limping between points, she recovered to secure a victory that will be recorded in the annals of sport for sheer bravery and an indomitable will to win.



Immediately following the conclusion of the final, **Ding Ning** was rushed to hospital. Later she returned for the medal ceremony, no bones broken

FAST EXCHANGES

No-one could have predicted the events that were to unfold as proceedings began. The crowd captivated, supporting their favourite with the cry of "jiayou" followed by the respective player's name greeted the start of the contest.

True to the best traditions of Chinese female table tennis, fast counter attacking play was the order of the day with **Liu Shiwen** the player to seize the opening game; over the table she excelled.

Returning courtside for the break between games, **Ding Ning** returned quickly to the table, eager to start a recovery; conversely **Liu Shiwen** took much longer, she was deep in thought.

GAME POINTS SAVED

Ding Ning started the second game in a positive manner, on most occasions being the first to execute a top spin stroke; **Liu Shiwen** absorbed the pressure and replied in kind.

There was little to choose between the two protagonists; at 8-all it was parity with **Ding Ning** to serve.

She employed her trademark squat style service technique but lost both points; **Liu Shiwen** held two game points. The next point went to **Ding Ning**, **Liu Shiwen** called "Time Out".

Arguably, it was early in the match but she had one service remaining in the sequence. The game point was saved. Eventually at 15-13, the decision went to **Ding Ning**, it was parity.

MAJOR BOOST

Undoubtedly the success was a major mental boost for **Ding Ning**, in the third game she established a 6-2 lead but could not capitalise, **Liu Shiwen** levelled at 7-all. Notably **Liu Shiwen** was very effective attacking quickly from the backhand creating angles, for **Ding Ning** the repost was to use her well renowned serving technique.

At 10-7, **Ding Ning** held three game points; a long rally followed ending with a scream from **Ding Ning**, she led by two games to one.

INSPIRED

Trailing, **Liu Shiwen** made an inspired start in the fourth game; she won the first four points. High class fast exchanges, **Ding Ning** levelled at 5-all. Successful in the rallies **Ding Ning** moved ahead 8-5; the next two points went to **Liu Shiwen**, **Ding Ning** called "Time Out".

The break proved fruitful at 10-7 **Ding Ning** held three game points; resolute **Liu Shiwen** saved two game points; she could not save a third.

LIGHTNING START

Facing the point of no return, **Liu Shiwen** made a lightning start in the fifth game, she went ahead 6-2; **Ding Ning** reduced the deficit to 9-8 but never gained parity. The difference was now just one game.

Positive; in the sixth game, **Liu Shiwen** again went ahead 6-2; only this time there was no recovery from **Ding Ning**, exhilarating counter top spin play of the very highest order was on the menu, a seventh game beckoned.

INJURY

A deciding game and at the very start drama; **Liu Shiwen** won the first point, the se-

cond saw a long rally with **Ding Ning** forced away from the table; she stumbled, and as she fell grimaced, it appeared she had twisted her right ankle.

Medical staff from the Chinese National Team rushed into the arena. **Liu Shiwen** stood motionless, quiet, steeped in concentration at the opposite end of the court, not turning round to look at the care **Ding Ning** was receiving.

EVERY MOVE APPLAUDED

Following an extended break **Ding Ning** returned to the applause of all in the Expo International Center.

Every move made by **Ding Ning** was applauded to the rafters, clearly in discomfort, limping between points, she levelled at 3-all but when the players changed ends, by one point the advantage was with **Liu Shiwen**.

UTILISE BACKHAND

Moving around the backhand to play a forehand top spin was not an option for **Ding Ning**, she had to play very much from the centre of the table to cover both wings. Quite incredibly she moved ahead 8-5.

The next point went to **Liu Shiwen**, then more drama; the umpire invoked the Expedite Rule.

Liu Shiwen reduced the deficit to one point at 9-8 but the next point went to **Ding Ning**; two match points, two Championships points.

"A special place in history for a sensational final."





STANDING OVATION

She needed just one; the crowd stood in homage to a man, woman and child. Somehow, **Ding Ning** had regained the title.

Struggling, she could not bear to stand for the on court interview.

SPECIAL PLACE IN HISTORY

Ding Ning was the World champion, the World champion in one of the most dramatic finals ever witnessed in the history of the event; the 2015 Women's Singles final will be talked about for many years to come.

A special place in history for a sensational final; for **Ding Ning**, through her incredible will to win, she is now a living legend.

REIGN OVER, LI XIAOXIA BEATEN BY LIU SHIWEN, DING NING ENDS ADVENTURES OF MU ZI

Crowned World champion in Paris in two years earlier, the reign of **Li Xiaoxia** came to an end on the afternoon of Saturday 2nd May at the QOROS 2015 World Championships in Suzhou.

Occupying the no.3 seeded position in the draw; she was beaten by **Liu Shiwen**, the no.2 seed, at the semi-final stage of the Women's Singles event; a contest that was a reversal of the result in the French capital city when they had met in the final.

In Paris, **Li Xiaoxia** had won in six games (11-8, 4-11, 11-7, 12-10, 6-11, 13-11); in Suzhou **Liu Shiwen** prevailed in one game less (11-6, 8-11, 11-9, 11-7, 11-8).

Success for **Liu Shiwen** was preceded by success for **Ding Ning**, the top seed, in the first of the two all-Chinese duels; she

accounted for qualifier **Mu Zi**, as tension packed seven games duel (9-11, 11-6, 12-10, 5-11, 11-6, 1-11, 11-6).

FAST EXCHANGES

Playing close to the table, **Mu Zi** excelled; she maintained the pressure on **Ding Ning**. Fast counter attacking play was very much the order of proceedings as the crowd encouraged their favourites.

"*Jiayou Ding Ding, jiayou **Ding Ning***" was followed by "*Jiayou **Mu Zi**, jiayou **Mu Zi***"; with the match swaying one way and then the next, as the respective supporters urged their favourite to play stronger, to play faster, to raise their game.

EARLY ADVANTAGE

The contest went the full distance.

Breath-taking rallies had been the order of the day in the first six games, it was no different in the seventh; high levels of consistency, balance and anticipation.



In the decider, arguably the extra experience of **Ding Ning** told; at the change of ends, **Ding Ning** led 5-2, forcing **Mu Zi** to elect for "Time Out". **Ding Ning** won the next point but at 6-5 the gap had narrowed to just one; understandably **Ding Ning** called "Time Out".

BREAK WORKED

One minute to bring mind, body and soul together, the break worked for **Ding Ning**, she moved ahead 8-5; then at 10-6 held four match points. She needed just one; **Ding Ning** rejoiced as though she had won the lottery, she beseeched the heavens.

EXPECTED RESULT

"It was the result to be expected", said **Mu Zi** who had contributed immensely to a high class contest. "I did my best but in the seventh game when I was down 2-5 I felt that I wasn't going to win." The three point gap proved crucial but **Mu Zi** fought to the bitter end and it was a somewhat relieved **Ding Ning** at the end of proceedings.

EMOTIONAL

"We know each other so well because we are both in the Chinese National Team", said **Ding Ning**. "I took the "Time Out" because I thought whoever won the next point would win the match; at the end I was so emotional; I just wanted the match to end."

SERVE AND RECEIVE DOMINANT

Long rallies, it was quite the opposite in the early stages of the duel between **Liu Shiwen** and **Li Xiaoxia**, the points were short and brief; serve and receive domi-

nated. The first two games were shared before in the third, **Liu Shiwen** went ahead 8-2, **Li Xiaoxia** reduced the deficit to 8-6; **Liu Shiwen** called "Time Out".

The break worked for **Liu Shiwen**; gaining in confidence but still with only brief exchanges, secured the fourth game.

TIME OUT

A three games to one lead, in the fifth, **Li Xiaoxia** started in a positive manner, she established a 6-2 lead but then lost the next three points; the gap down to one point, **Li Xiaoxia** called "Time Out".

"I did my best but in the seventh game when I was down 2-5 I felt that I wasn't going to win."

Undoubtedly **Li Xiaoxia** had no other choice other than to call "Time Out" but it was **Liu Shiwen** who was the more positive on the return to action. She won the next four points, before at 10-7 holding three match points.

Li Xiaoxia saved one match point but not the second; the reign was over.

"I took the "Time Out" in the third game because I had held a lead and **Li Xiaoxia** was recovering", explained **Liu Shiwen**. "In the fifth game I felt that **Li Xiaoxia** was worried, she was not calm; I told myself that I must stay calm."

Liu Shiwen remained calm, a place in the final was booked; **Ding Ning** awaits.





XU XIN ADDS TO TITLE HAUL, PARTNERS ZHANG JIKE TO MEN'S DOUBLES GOLD

Mixed Doubles gold one day earlier in harness with Korea's **Yang Haeun**, China's **Xu Xin** added to his collection of titles at the QOROS 2015 World Championships in Suzhou on the evening of Saturday 2nd May.

Partnering colleague **Zhang Jike**, the duo captured the Men's Doubles crown, overcoming **Fan Zhendong** and **Zhou Yu** in an all-Chinese final.

Xu Xin and **Zhang Jike** won in six games (12-14, 11-7, 11-9, 9-11, 11-7, 11-9); having started proceedings as the no.7 seeds with the partnership of **Fan Zhendong** and **Zhou Yu** being the no.15 seeds.

LITTLE TO CHOOSE

All four players are well known to each other; there was little to choose between the two pairs in the opening exchanges; both partnerships well aware of the benefit of an early advantage.

The first two games were shared; in the third neither partnership could establish a clear lead. The third game, by the minimal two point margin, went to **Xu Xin** and **Zhang Jike**.

It was a rather subdued **Zhang Jike**, a very vocal **Xu Xin**, no doubt anxious to add to the Mixed Doubles title.

ARCHITECT AND KILLER

Left handed, pen-hold grip; **Xu Xin** was very much the perfect partner for the right handed **Zhang Jike**; just as was **Zhou Yu**, a left handed shake-hands grip exponent with supple wrists, for **Fan Zhendong**.

In the words of Gao Jun of the United States, herself a most accomplished doubles player, **Xu Xin** and **Zhou Yu** were the architects, **Zhang Jike** and **Fan Zhendong** were the killers.

FOURTH GAME

Trailing two games to one, in the fourth game, **Fan Zhendong** and **Zhou Yu** established a three point lead.

It was in a game where the level of play rose; however, at 7-6 the advantage was just one point. **Fan Zhendong** assuming the role of team captain, called "Time Out".

Xu Xin and **Zhang Jike** levelled but at 10-9 it was game point to **Fan Zhendong** and **Zhou Yu**; a chance to level the match, the chance was taken.

IMMEDIATE RESPONSE

Matters level, immediately **Xu Xin** and **Zhang Jike** responded. They secured the fifth game and then in the sixth established a commanding 9-3 lead.

It appeared they were coasting to victory, **Fan Zhendong** and **Zhou Yu**, fought; at 9-8 the gap was down to just one point. The



next point went to **Xu Xin** and **Zhang Jike**, two match points, two Championships.

Fan Zhendong and **Zhu Yu** saved one match point but they could not save two.

In 2011 in Rotterdam **Xu Xin** had won in partnership with **Ma Long**. In 2015 he won in with **Zhang Jike**.

EXPERIENCE COUNTED

*"I think that our extra experience counted", said **Zhang Jike**. "I think that was especially important at the end of the match."*

Meanwhile for **Xu Xin** it was further success but, for a chance to win the coveted Men's Singles title, he will have to wait two years, having been beaten in the fourth round one day earlier by colleague, **Fang Bo**.

*"I have won two titles and I hope that I can learn from the experience", said **Xu Xin**. "I've won Mixed Doubles and Men's Doubles now the challenge is to win the Men's Singles."*

IMPRESSIVE RECORD

It was the 16th time that a Chinese pair has won the Men's Doubles title, the 12th time it has been an all-Chinese affair.

REVERSAL OF FORTUNES FOR LIU SHIWEN, TITLE SECURED WITH ZHU YULING

Silver medallist one day earlier in the Women's Singles event at the QOROS 2015 World Championships in the Chinese city of Suzhou, one day later on Sunday 3rd May, it was gold for **Liu Shiwen**.

Partnering **Zhu Yuling** and occupying the third seeded position in the draw, the Women's Doubles title was secured; the pair



accounting for Chinese National Team compatriots and seventh seeds, **Ding Ning** and **Li Xiaoxia** at the final hurdle.

Liu Shiwen and **Zhu Yuling** won in seven games [8-11, 11-8, 3-11, 11-8, 11-13, 11-8, 11-8].

BURNING QUESTION

The burning question at the start of the contest was very much the fitness of **Ding Ning**, the right ankle being strapped following her fall in the Women's Singles final one night earlier.

Entering the court, the concept was to run in to the arena in the glare of the spotlight; understandably, **Ding Ning** and **Li Xiaoxia** walked in stately fashion.

MOVEMENT RESTRICTED

Certainly **Ding Ning** was not moving as if fully fit but with a partner of the quality of **Li Xiaoxia**, she could hardly have asked for better support.

Although **Ding Ning** is most effective executing forehand top spin strokes; that technique required her putting pressure on the



injured ankle. Playing from the backhand in a counter attacking fashion, she was more assured

PIVOTAL TIME OUT

However after the first three games it was **Ding Ning** and **Li Xiaoxia** who held a one game advantage; in the fourth game they went ahead 7-5.

Danger signs were looming for **Liu Shiwen** and **Zhu Yuling**; they called "Time Out. It proved a most wise decision, they surrendered just one more point; parity had been established.

Two games apiece, the next two games were shared; a deciding seventh game was required.

DECIDING GAME

A capacity crowd was spell bound; with **Liu Shiwen** and **Zhu Yuling** holding a one point advantage when the players changed ends.

Clearly **Ding Ning** was in increasing discomfort, the point that took the score to 7-all seeing her executing a winning forehand sitting on the floor, having lost her balance owing to restricted mobility.

The next two points were shared but the next two went to **Liu Shiwen** and **Zhu Yu-**

ling; two match points, just one was needed, a forehand top spin from **Li Xiaoxia** finished in the base of the net.

Liu Shiwen and **Zhu Yuling** celebrated.

CREDIT TO DING NING

*"I must give great credit to **Ding Ning** for even playing in the final when she had an injury, it was a really brave effort", said **Li Xiaoxia**, who indicated that retirement from competitive play may not be too far distant.*

"My time in the Chinese National Team is coming to a close", said the 27 year old. "Now my task is the help the young players and to enjoy the opportunities which may come my way."

There is undoubtedly more to come from **Li Xiaoxia** but will the Rio 2016 Olympic Games be her swansong?

APOLOGIES TO PARTNER

Certainly, everyone in the Suzhou International Expo Center warmed to the efforts of **Ding Ning** and **Li Xiaoxia**.

*"I think overall we did a good job", added **Ding Ning**. "I'm just sorry for my partner that we didn't win."*

Disappointment for **Ding Ning** and **Li Xiaoxia** but with the former now being the World champion and the latter the reigning Olympic champion, there is some consolation!

DELIGHT

However for **Liu Shiwen** and **Zhu Yuling** it was delight.

*"At the start we were not the favourites but with **Ding Ning** being injured it made a difference", explained **Liu Shiwen** who was*

"I think overall we did a good job."





full of smiles, the emotions the opposite of the previous evening when beaten by **Ding Ning** in the Women's Singles final.

*"I'm so pleased we won", added **Zhu Yuling**.
"Really pleased we have won the title."*

FOUR IN A ROW, FIVE IN A ROW

Runners up spot for **Ding Ning** and runners up spot yet again, four in a row. In 2009 in Yokohama and in 2011 in Rotterdam she finished in the silver medal position in partnership with Guo Yan, two years ago in harness with **Liu Shiwen**.

Meanwhile for **Li Xiaoxia** it is five World Championships Women's Doubles final in succession.

In partnership with **Guo Yue** she was the runner up in Zagreb in 2007, beaten by Wang Nan in **Zhang Yining** in the final; in the next three, also with **Guo Yue**, the winner.

CHAMPIONS

Two years after the success in Paris, it was runners up spot, the winners, the QOROS 2015 Women's Doubles World champions, **Liu Shiwen** and **Zhu Yuling**.

Occupying the no.5 seeded position in the competition, at the final hurdle they beat the Japanese combination of **Maharu Yoshimura** and **Kasumi Ishikawa**, the no.20 seeds, to claim the title.

Impressively, **Xu Xin** and **Yang Haeun** won in four straight games (11-7, 11-8, 11-4, 11-6).

SUCCESSFUL DEBUT, XU XIN AND YANG HAEUN WRITE HISTORY IN SUZHOU

A debut as a pairing, China **Xu Xin** in partnership with Korea's **Yang Haeun** won the Mixed Doubles title at the QOROS 2015 World Championships in Suzhou on the evening of Friday 1st May.

THE MIGHTY FOREHAND

The problem for the Japanese duo, as it is for all who confront **Xu Xin**, was stopping the Chinese star's devastating forehand top spin; **Maharu Yoshimura** and **Kasumi Ishikawa** found that feat a step too far.

Undoubtedly, **Xu Xin** was the team captain but playing consistently, keeping the ball on the table, **Yang Haeun** created the opportunities for the Chinese star to end the point in style.

HIGHER THAN EXPECTED

*"Yang Haeun played beyond the level I expected; her performance was quite outstanding", said **Xu Xin**, who was equally praiseworthy with regards to the efforts of **Maharu Yoshimura** and **Kasumi Ishikawa**.*

*"They played very well; yesterday they beat Kim Hyok Bong and Kim Jong, the reigning champions; that was a very good performance", added **Xu Xin**. "Actually, when I saw the draw I thought there was a possibility that we might play **Maharu Yoshimura** and **Kasumi Ishikawa** in the final."*

GOOD COMMUNICATION

Equally, **Yang Haeun** was delighted with the performance.



"We had little time to practise", she said. "However, I think one of the main reasons for our success was that we communicated well."

PLEASED TO REACH FINAL

Defeat for **Maharu Yoshimura** and **Kasumi Ishikawa** but I suspect if you had told them one week ago that they would reach the final, they would have been more than pleased with that outcome.

Both **Maharu Yoshimura** and **Kasumi Ishikawa** were not crestfallen, they were realistic. "It is a life changing moment for me", said **Maharu Yoshimura**. "It is a big moment in my career."

BIRMINGHAM 1977

Equally **Kasumi Ishikawa** was positive.

"We lost but it is 38 years since a Japanese pair reached the final of the Mixed Doubles event at a World Championships", she said. "We are not that disappointed."

The last Japanese pair to reach a Mixed Doubles final at a World Championships was the combination of Tokio Tasaka and Sachiko Yokota in 1977 in the English city of Birmingham; they were beaten in the final by the French partnership of Jacques Secrétin and Claude Bergeret (21-17, 21-14, 21-17).

Meanwhile, the most recent occasion when a Japanese pair won the title was in Munich is 1969. Nobuhiko Hasegawa and Yasuko Konno beat colleagues Mitsuru Kohno and Shaeko Hirota to claim the title (21-17, 21-19, 21-19).

FIRST TIME

Success for **Xu Xin** and **Yang Haeun** means they have established their own niche in table tennis history.



It is the first time that China and Korea has combined to win a doubles title of any kind at a World Championships and the first time either nation has struck doubles gold when not partnering one of their own.

THREE GAMES

Furthermore, **Yang Haeun** is the first Korean to win the Mixed Doubles title since Yoo Namkyu and Hyun Junghwa won in 1989 in Dortmund when beating Zoran Kalinic and Gordana Perkucin, in the final. Zoran Kalinic and Gordana Perkucin represented Yugoslavia. Notably in 1989, the Mixed Doubles event was best of three games, Yoo Namkyu and Hyun Junghwa won in straight games (21-7, 21-13).

YOKOHAMA

Of course for China it is much more recent; in 2009 in Yokohama, Zhang Chao and **Cao Zhen** beat colleagues Hao Shuai and **Mu Zi** to claim gold (11-7, 11-7, 11-9, 9-11, 11-8).

FURTHER BACK IN TIME

However, the time gap is much greater since a pair formed by two players from different national associations won the Mixed Doubles title at a World Championships. The most recent is the success achieved in 1954 by Ivan Andreadis who represented Czechoslovakia and partnered Hungary's Gizella Farkas; at the final hurdle they beat Japan's Yoshio Tomita and Fujie Eguchi to secure the top prize (21-17, 19-21, 21-15, 23-21).

Now just over 60 years later, Japan again had to settle for runners up spot; in Suzhou new champions were crowned, **Xu Xin** and **Yang Haeun**.



GAC GROUP 2015 ITTF WORLD TABLE TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS, SUZHOU

RESULTS MEN'S SINGLES

Quarter finals

✓ Ma Long (CHN)	4-0						
✗ Tang Peng (H-K)							
11-7	11-9	11-6	11-1	/	/	/	
✓ Fan Zhendong (CHN)	4-2						
✗ Timo Boll (ALL)							
12-10	11-9	8-11	11-7	13-15	11-7	/	
✓ Zhang Jike (CHN)	4-1						
✗ Jun Mizutani (JAP)							
11-4	11-6	10-12	11-5	11-9	/	/	
✓ Fang Bo (CHN)	4-1						
✗ Patrick Franziska (ALL)							
11-5	11-9	8-11	11-5	11-5	/	/	

Semi-finals

✓ Ma Long (CHN)	4-1						
✗ Fan Zhendong (CHN)							
11-1	11-7	11-8	7-11	11-5	/	/	
✓ Fang Bo (CHN)	4-1						
✗ Zhang Jike (CHN)							
11-5	11-7	5-11	11-9	12-10	/	/	

Final

✓ Ma Long (CHN)	4-2						
✗ Fang Bo (CHN)							
11-7	7-11	11-4	11-8	11-13	11-4	/	

RESULTS MEN'S DOUBLES

Semi-finals

✓ Xu Xin/Zhang Jike (CHN)	4-2						
✗ Lee Sangsu/Seo Hyundeok (CDS)							
9-11	11-6	11-9	11-6	4-11	11-3	/	
✓ Fan Zhendong/Zhou Yu (CHN)	4-0						
✗ Kenta Matsudaira/Koki Niwa (JAP)							
11-6	11-7	11-6	11-6	/	/	/	

Final

✓ Xu Xin/Zhang Jike (CHN)	4-2						
✗ Fan Zhendong/Zhou Yu (CHN)							
12-14	11-7	11-9	9-11	11-7	11-9	/	

RESULTS WOMEN'S SINGLES

Quarter finals

✓ Ding Ning (CHN)	4-3						
✗ Wu Yang (CHN)							
11-8	11-7	11-5	7-11	6-11	8-11	11-8	
✓ Mu Zi (CHN)	4-0						
✗ Feng Tianwei (SIN)							
11-5	11-2	11-9	11-5	/	/	/	
✓ Li Xiaoxia (CHN)	4-2						
✗ Mima Ito (JAP)							
9-11	14-16	11-2	11-7	13-11	11-2	/	
✓ Liu Shiwen (CHN)	4-1						
✗ Zhu Yuling (CHN)							
11-3	8-11	11-5	11-7	11-3	/	/	

Semi-finals

✓ Ding Ning (CHN)	4-3						
✗ Mu Zi (CHN)							
9-11	11-6	12-10	5-11	11-6	1-11	11-6	
✓ Liu Shiwen (CHN)	4-1						
✗ Li Xiaoxia (CHN)							
11-6	8-11	11-9	11-7	11-8	/	/	

Final

✓ Ding Ning (CHN)	4-3						
✗ Liu Shiwen (CHN)							
7-11	15-13	11-7	11-9	9-11	4-11	11-8	

Semi-finals

✓ Ding Ning/Li Xiaoxia (CHN)	4-0						
✗ Ji Lie/Qian Li (P-B/POL)							
11-5	11-2	11-7	11-6	/	/	/	
✓ Liu Shiwen/Zhu Yuling (CHN)	4-1						
✗ Feng Tianwei/Yu Mengyu (SIN)							
9-11	11-9	11-6	11-7	11-4	/	/	

Final

✓ Liu Shiwen/Zhu Yuling (CHN)	4-3						
✗ Ding Ning/Li Xiaoxia (CHN)							
8-11	11-8	3-11	11-8	11-13	11-8	11-8	

RESULTS MIXED DOUBLES

Semi-finals

✓ Maharu Yoshimura/ Kasumi Ishikawa (JAP)					4-2		
✗ Kim Hyok-Bong/Kim Jong (CDN)							
11-8	5-11	11-6	10-12	11-7	11-4	/	
✓ Xu Xin/Yang Haeun (CHN/ CDS)					4-1		
✗ Wong Chun Ting/Doo Hoi Kem (H-K)							
11-6	11-5	9-11	11-5	11-9	/	/	

Final

✓ Xu Xin/Yang Haeun (CHN/ CDS)					4-0		
✗ Maharu Yoshimura/ Kasumi Ishikawa (JAP)							
11-7	11-8	11-4	11-6	/	/	/	





CHAMPIONNATS DU MONDE À SUZHOU



GAC GROUP 2015 ITTF WORLD TOUR, JAPAN OPEN (SUPER)

DREAM ENDS FOR MAHARU YOSHIMURA, XU XIN CLAIMS KOBE GOLD

Successful earlier in the year in both Spain and Croatia, the ambitions of a third title and the dreams of being the fourth to win on home soil, ended for **Maharu Yoshimura** in the late afternoon of Sunday 28th June at the GAC Group 2015 ITTF World Tour Japan Open in Kobe.

The 21 year old, who had been required to compete in the qualification stage of proceedings, having started his journey four days earlier, was beaten by China's **Xu Xin** in the Men's Singles final; he experienced defeat in five games at the hands of the no.2 seed (9-11, 11-2, 14-12, 11-7, 11-7).

THREE JAPANESE CHAMPIONS

Thus he failed to follow in the footsteps of Japanese National Team compatriot, **Masato Shiono**, who likewise had started matters in the qualification stage in 2013 and had progressed to win the Men's Singles title when the tournament was staged in Yokohama.

Equally, he failed to match the efforts of **Seiya Kishikawa** and **Jun Mizutani** who, alongside **Masato Shiono**, are the only host winners of the Men's Singles title at an ITTF World Tour tourna-

"I am really upset losing in the final, Xu Xin has great power..."

ment in Japan. On both occasions in Kobe, **Seiya Kishikawa** had won in 2011, **Jun Mizutani** in 2012.

SUCCESS NOT FAILURE

Failure, not at all, losing to **Xu Xin** in the final and not emulating his three colleagues was no failure whatsoever; it was an incredible achievement.

It matched his efforts of some three years ago, when against all expectations he reached the final of the GAC Group 2012 Asian Cup and faced **Xu Xin** for the one and only previous occasion in his career.

He was beaten in straight games but, as in Kobe, it was a quite staggering achievement; however in ensuing tournaments he was not able to replicate the form. Now more mature, once a model of inconsistency, **Maharu Yoshimura** is becoming the model of consistency.



he had been beaten in an ITTF World Tour Men's Singles final, the only two further appearances being in Spain and Croatia earlier this year.

"I am really upset losing in the final, Xu Xin has great power and is very strong but still I thought that I could win the match but for Xu Xin to compliment my play is a huge honour", said Maharu Yoshimura. "My greatest weapon is my serve, I want to polish that weapon, to make it even better; I played a lot of tough opponents here and it gave me great confidence that I was able to beat them."

There is no doubt, **Maharu Yoshimura** has risen to a new level and he is ambitious.

WORLD RANKING

In the past year there have been few disappointing performances from **Maharu Yoshimura**.

The fact is endorsed by his World Ranking; in June 2014 he stood at no.119, now in June 2015 he is at no.30 and surely when the July listings are announced, he is set to go higher.

SELECTION DILEMMA

However, will his efforts cause problems? Might a chance of thinking be needed from the Japanese hierarchy?

Throughout the ZEN-NOH 2015 World Team Championships in Tokyo, the backbone of the Japanese Men's outfit was **Jun Mizutani**, **Koki Niwa** and **Kenta Matsudaira**; what will it be at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games?

Undoubtedly in Spain, Croatia and now on home soil, **Maharu Yoshimura** has stated his case; furthermore **Xu Xin** was well aware that he had beaten a worthy opponent on what was, somewhat surprisingly, his first appearance on the ITTF World Tour in Japan.

MAJOR RIVAL

"It is my first Japan Open, so it is very special for me to win here, Maharu Yoshimura played amazingly well", said Xu Xin. "He is still young and he is going to be a big rival for me and the Chinese team in the future; he surprised me in the first game, the large crowd supporting him put me off my game a little."



A large crowd; an estimated 3,000 spectators were present for the concluding day of action in Kobe.

"I made some adjustments in the second game and I was very relieved when I won it, to make it one-one; then I believed I could win", added Xu Xin. "Winning ITTF World Tour titles are always a great feeling."

FIRST DEFEAT IN FINAL

A first for **Xu Xin**; it was also a first for **Maharu Yoshimura**, it was the first time

POSITIVE

"I am excited about being the future of Japanese table tennis", he added. "I now want to push for Rio 2016, and I want to break down the great wall of Chinese players and take Japan to the top."

In Kobe **Maharu Yoshimura** made another step forward but at the end of the day, **Xu Xin** held the aces and added to his collection of titles.

He has now won 11 ITTF World Tour Men's Singles titles in 24 final appearances.



CHEN MENG BEATS ZHU YULING TO SECURE HARD EARNED WOMEN'S SINGLES TITLE

Present some two months ago at the Qoros 2015 World Championships in Suzhou but only on duty in the Mixed Doubles event, where she partnered Frenchman **Emmanuel Lebeson**, the partnership suffering a third round defeat against **Yan An** and **Wu Yang**, China's **Chen Meng** won the Women's Singles title at the GAC Group 2015 ITTF World Tour Japan Open in Kobe on the late afternoon of Sunday 28th June.



"I was very aggressive in the match..."



Occupying the no.8 seeded position in the draw, she accounted for colleague **Zhu Yuling**, the no.4 seed, at the final hurdle (13-11, 6-11, 5-11, 11-4, 11-5, 6-11, 11-7) to collect her fifth career ITTF World Tour Women's Singles title in her sixth appearance in a final.

Only one final defeat in the gold medal contest; somewhat ironically that was in 2014 in Kuwait when beaten by **Zhu Yuling** in the final; the win gave **Zhu Yuling** her first ever such title

TOUGH MATCHES

*"I am happy to win this championship, my last two matches were very tough, this victory will give me a lot of confidence in the future", said **Chen Meng**. "I was very aggressive in the match, which **Zhu Yuling** did not cope well with; I thought I was close to winning the match in the sixth game but **Zhu Yuling** fought very hard to take it to a seventh."*

Both **Chen Meng** and **Zhu Yuling** are right handed top spin attacking players, arguably **Chen Meng** is the more powerful but when



it comes to consistency, keeping the ball on the table, it is difficult to name a player who is better than **Zhu Yuling**.

DEFINITE GOAL

*"To win the tournament is very important but more than that it is to improve as a player in each match, which will hopefully lead me to becoming the World Champion one day", added **Chen Meng**.*

One day that goal may come true but if she is to succeed in her avowed aim, the player she may well have to overcome in **Zhu Yuling**; they are from the same generation. They are only one year apart in age, both with January birthdays, **Chen Meng** is 21 years old, **Zhu Yuling** is 20 years of age.



"This gave me motivation for the doubles."

HONOURS EVEN

Understandably, already they are no strangers to each other on the international scene; the win for **Chen Meng** in Kobe means that it is honours even.

Each has won four of the eight meetings with **Zhu Yuling** having a distinct preference for Kuwait; in addition to the success in February 2014, she won when they clashed in the Women's Singles event in both 2012 and 2013, the one further win for **Zhu Yuling** being achieved at the Liebherr 2010 Austrian Open.

Meanwhile, for **Chen Meng**, all her wins over **Zhu Yuling** have been in finals. Prior to Kobe, she prevailed in the Girls' Singles final at the Volkswagen 2011 World Cham-



pionships in Bahrain; in the same event at the Asian Junior and Cadet Championships later in the year and in the Women's Singles gold medal match at the 2013 East Asia Games.

FINAL APPEARANCES

It was for **Zhu Yuling** her fourth appearance in an ITTF World Tour Women's Singles final; it was her second defeat.

In addition to the success some 18 months ago in Kuwait, she had won later in 2014 in Stockholm, having in 2010 in Korea been beaten in the final by Singapore's now retired **Wang Yuegu**.

Meanwhile, for **Chen Meng**, she added to her list of titles; previously she had won in Suzhou at the Harmony Open in 2012 and 2013; whilst also in 2012 succeeding in Qatar and in 2013 in Stockholm.

CHAMPIONS IN ROTTERDAM, NOW CHAMPIONS IN KOBE

Crowned World champions in Rotterdam in 2011, **Ma Long** and **Xu Xin** won the Men's Doubles title at the GAC Group 2015 ITTF World Tour Japan Open in Kobe on Sunday 28th June; at the final hurdle they overcame Chinese National Team colleagues, **Fan Zhen-dong** and **Shang Kun** to arrest the title.

However, for the pairing who had emerged successful some four years earlier in the Dutch city, without ever being extended the full distance, it was a different story in Kobe; they had to withstand a brave recovery by the spirited adversaries to secure gold.





Eventually **Ma Long** and **Xu Xin** won in five games (11-8, 13-11, 7-11, 10-12, 11-8).

TOGETHER AGAIN

*"In the last moments we did better than our rivals, which is gained us the victory", said **Ma Long**. "It is great that we worked so well together to win the tournament; this is the first time we have played together so a long time, so it's pleasing that we were able to become the champions."*

The most recent occasion the pair appeared on the ITTF World Tour as a Men's Doubles partnership was at the GAC Group 2013 ITTF World Tour Harmony Open in Suzhou, when they beat Japan's **Kenta Matsudaira** and **Koki Niwa** in the final to collect their fourth career Men's Doubles title as a partnership.

EARLIER TITLES

Earlier in 2012 they had won in Korea overcoming colleagues **Wang Hao** and **Zhang Jike** in the final, having in 2009 succeeded in Denmark and in Doha. In Denmark they beat Germany's **Timo Boll** and Christian Süss in the final; in Doha it was Hao Shuai and **Wang Liqin**.

CLEAR REASON

Kobe it was the first time together in recent times but you do not have to be a member Mensa International to understand the reasons.

Undoubtedly the selection for the Rio 2016 Olympic Games will be **Ma Long**, **Xu Xin** and **Zhang Jike**; the third match in the Men's Team event is doubles.

Earlier this year in Kuwait **Xu Xin** and **Zhang Jike** combined, suffering a somewhat surprise defeat in the final against Chinese Taipei's **Chiang Hung-Chieh** and **Huang Sheng-Sheng** before redeeming themselves in Suzhou by becoming World champions.

Later in Germany **Ma Long** and **Zhang Jike** were partners and as with **Xu Xin** and **Zhang Jike** in Kuwait, experienced a surprise defeat. They were beaten at the quarter-final stage by Korea's **Jung Youngsik** and **Kim Minseok**. Logically **Ma Long** and **Xu Xin** was the partnership for Kobe

EXPERIENCE

*"We have a lot of experience; it is nice to have beaten them", added **Ma Long**. "I was very disappointed that I got knocked out so early in the singles. This gave me motivation for the doubles."*

TITLES

Success for **Ma Long** means overall his has now won 17 ITTF World Tour Men's Doubles titles in 27 finals, for **Xu Xin** it is 13 successes in 23 finals.

FIRST ATTEMPT, LIU FEI AND WU YANG WOMEN'S DOUBLES CHAMPIONS

China's **Liu Fei** and **Wu Yang** won the Women's Doubles title at the GAC Group 2015 ITTF World Tour Japan Open in Kobe on Sunday 28th June; not seeded, they accounted for the partnership formed by Singapore's **Lin Ye** and **Zhou Yihan** in four games at the final hurdle (11-6, 7-11, 11-9, 11-5).

Furthermore, it was success at the first attempt, on the international scene the pair had never previously joined forces; for **Liu Fei** it was her first ever appearance in an ITTF World Tour final, for **Wu Yang**, her eighth in an ITTF World Tour Women's Doubles final but somewhat surprisingly only her second success.



In 2009 in her first ever ITTF World Tour Women's Doubles final, in partnership with **Fan Ying**, she won in Poland but on a further four occasions the same partnership had to settle for runners up spot.

RUNNERS UP

They were the silver medallists in 2011 in Slovenia and Austria, as well as in 2012 once again in Slovenia and also in Hungary.

Five finals with **Fan Ying**; it is one with **Zhu Yuling** and one with **Hu Limei**; in partnership with **Zhu Yuling** she was the runner up in Austria in 2010 and four years later in 2014 in harness with **Hu Limei** in Sweden.

SPECIAL FEELING

*"As a pair it is the first time we have played together so it is a good and special feeling to win this title", said **Wu Yang**. "It is easy to play together because we are both defenders, we gelled quickly with each other; our coach will decide if we play together in the future."*

Unquestionably **Liu Wei** is an ideal partner. *"I am very excited that I have now won a big title", added **Liu Wei** who has never previously advanced beyond the preliminary stage of an ITTF World Tour Women's Doubles event.*

*"We are a good combination", concluded **Liu Wei**. "It was fun playing with her."*



"...it is a good and special feeling to win this title."

ENHANCE CHANCES

Defeat for **Lin Ye** and **Zhou Yihan** but they greatly enhance their chances of gaining an invitation to the end of year GAC Group 2015 ITTF World Tour Grand Finals.

Prior to matters commencing in Kobe, the stood in fifth position in the Race to Lisbon Women's Doubles Standings but of the four pairs higher, only the top two had met the minimum four appearance criteria. The pairs in question are Hong Kong's **Doo Hoi Kem** and **Lee Ho Ching** followed by colleagues **Jiang Huajun** and **Tie Yana**.

FIFTH APPEARANCE

Kobe is the fifth appearance of the year on the GAC Group 2015 ITTF World Tour for **Lin Ye** and **Zhou Yihan**. It is the second time they have finished in runners up spot; they were the silver medallists in Qatar being beaten by **Jiang Huajun** and **Tie Yana** in the final.

The result in Qatar underlined the progress they were making; earlier in the year in Hungary they had been beaten in the opening round by Hong Kong's **Jiang Huajun** and **Li Ching Wan**, before in Kuwait losing to **Ding Ning** and **Zhu Yuling** in the quarter-finals.

ONLY ONCE

All worthy performances and only once this year have they not progressed to the main draw; in Germany they were beaten in the second preliminary round by Russia's **Yana Noskova** and **Yulia Prokhorova**.





GAC GROUP 2015 ITTF WORLD TOUR, KOREA OPEN (SUPER)

JUNG YOUNGSIK WINS MEN'S SINGLES TITLE, MOST SUCCESSFUL PLAYER IN INCHEON

Winner earlier in the day in the Men's Doubles event in partnership with colleague **Kim Minseok**, **Jung Youngsik** won the Men's Singles title at the GAC Group 2015 ITTF World Tour Korea Open on the late afternoon of Sunday 5th July; thus he left the city of Incheon as the most successful player in the whole tournament.

Often it is quoted that experience counts, in the contest to decide the name of the champion it was youthful athletic enthusiasm that won the day, as the 23 year old the no.4 seed beat compatriot, 35 year old **Joo Saehyuk**, the no.4 seed and the oldest player in the whole tournament, to arrest the title.

Impressively **Jung Youngsik** won in five games (11-9, 11-1, 9-11, 11-9, 11-8); to inflict yet another defeat in an ITTF World Tour Men's Singles final on his senior adversary; six appearances, five defeats is the **Joo Saehyuk** tally.

UNBELIEVABLE FEELING

*"It is an unbelievable feeling to be the champion here in my home country", said **Jung Youngsik**. "My victory at the Australian Open earlier this year was my first ever ITTF World Tour title and it gave me immense confidence, as I now believe that I am good enough to be winning these big events."*

LANDMARK RESULTS

Undoubtedly succeeding in the Australian city of Tweed Heads was a landmark victory for **Jung Youngsik**, when he beat Hong Kong's **Ho Kwan Kit** in the final. However, was the result of one week earlier in the Philippines, when the top seed, he had been beaten by Japan's second seeded **Yuya Oshima** in the final been even more telling?

Was it that reverse given the Korean that vital extra degree of motivation and self-belief?



QUARTER-FINAL EXITS

Prior the Philippines, **Jung Youngsik** had never ventured beyond the last eight of in an ITTF World Tour Men's Singles event, six quarter-finals, six defeats.

However, with the benefit of hindsight, he did show signs earlier this year on the GAC Group 2015 ITTF World Tour, that progressing to the concluding day of action was very much on the cards.

LAST EIGHT IN KUWAIT AND QATAR

In Kuwait, notably he beat **Vladimir Samsonov** of Belarus and colleague **Kim Min-seok**; before, as previously during his career losing at the quarter-final stage to China's redoubtable **Xu Xin**.

"I felt that I was playing well..."

One week later in Qatar, it was again quarter-final qualms. He accounted for Austria's **Chen Weixing** and Poland's **Daniel Gorak** before Germany's **Dimitrij Ovtcharov** ended adventures.

FIRST ROUND EXITS

Similarly on the latter's home soil in Bremen. He experienced defeat at the hands of **Dimitrij Ovtcharov**, being beaten in the opening round; a fate he was to suffer one week ago in Kobe, when losing to the host nation's in form **Maharu Yoshimura**.

It would seem that just as his win in Australia was a source of motivation, so was his defeat in the Land of the Rising Sun.



"I felt that I was playing well last week at the Japan Open and still lost pretty early, which I was very disappointed about, I am glad that I could get the results that I was looking for here", explained **Jung Youngsik**. "All my focus is now trying to qualify to the Rio 2016 Olympic Games."

FOCUS ON RIO DE JANEIRO

Only **Joo Saehyuk** remains from the Men's Team who gained the silver medal at the London 2012 Olympic Games, Ryu Seung-min and **Oh Sangeun** have retired from the international scene; for **Jung Youngsik**, an opportunity surely awaits.

Two ITTF World Tour Men's Singles titles in 2015, wins against high class experienced players, surely he has stated his case.

AI FUKUHARA WINS IN INCHEON, AVOIDS TASTE OF OWN MEDICINE

A decade and more ago; the player who once terrorised elder adversaries, notably by reaching the quarter-finals at the Liebherr 2003 World Championships in Paris when only 14 years old, **Ai Fukuhara** won the Women's Singles title at the GAC Group 2015 ITTF World Tour Korea Open in Incheon on Sunday 5th July.

Now 26 years of age, at the final hurdle, she beat the 14 year old who currently terrorises more senior adversaries; the no.2 seed, **Ai Fukuhara** accounted for Japanese National Team colleague, **Mima Ito** (11-6, 11-7, 12-10, 11-4).

She avoided the fate so many have suffered in recent times against the record breaking teenager and endured the feelings her opponents experienced when she was the wonder girl.

HIGHER LEVEL

"Playing against **Mima Ito** is not like playing against a regular 14 year old; her level is much higher than that", said **Ai Fukuhara**. "Today I wanted to show everyone that I was still one of the best in Japan and I am ahead of all these young talented girls; I played very well today, I was able to win very comprehensively but believe me, it was not easy."

The top step of the medal podium in Incheon, it was her second such title of the year and the fourth of her career.

In 2009 she won in the Moroccan city of Rabat, in 2013 on home soil in Yokohama before earlier this year succeeding in the east coast Australian city of Tweed Heads when she beat Korea's **Jeon Jihee** in the final.





Tour Women's Singles appearances, for **Mima Ito**, it was the first such a final in which she had suffered defeat.

Earlier this year she won in Germany and in Belarus. In Korea it was runners up spot, the top prize belonged to **Ai Fukuhara**.

JUNG YOUNGSIK AND KIM MINSEOK PREVAIL, MAJOR BOOST FOR LISBON HOPES

Very much in contention for a place in the end of year GAC Group 2015 ITTF World Tour Grand Finals, on Sunday 5th July the partnership of **Jung Youngsik** and **Kim Minseok** gave their chances of an invitation to the Portuguese capital city of Lisbon a massive boost.

They won the Men's Doubles title at the GAC Group 2015 ITTF World Tour Korea Open in Incheon.

The no.3 seeds, at the final hurdle, they overcame the non-seeded combination of **Cho Seungmin** and **Kim Minhyeok** in an all Korea final, prevailing in a contest where their teenage adversaries, more accustomed to life on the ITTF Junior Circuit, proved most worthy adversaries.

TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS

Success in Australia and now in Korea but **Ai Fukuhara** has experienced trials and tribulations on this year's GAC Group ITTF World Tour.

The visit to the Philippines was one of relative achievement; she reached the final, where occupying the second seeded position in the draw, she was beaten in the final by top seed and colleague, **Kasumi Ishikawa**.

UNEXPECTED DEFEATS

However, the remaining four excursions have all ended in tears.

At the GAC Group 2015 ITTF World Tour German Open, the no.5 seed, she was beaten in the opening round by Hong Kong qualifier, **Doo Hoi Kem**; the following week in Spain when the no.2 seed, she suffered a semi-final exit, losing to colleague and no.3 seed **Ai Fukuhara**.

The difference in seeding may not have been that great but the comment made by **Sayaka Hirano** after the match "*I never beat **Ai Fukuhara***" summed up the scale of the defeat.

A semi-final exit in Spain, in both Zagreb and Japan it was farewell in round two of the Women's Singles event. In Zagreb, when the top seed, she was beaten by Luxembourg's **Ni Xialian**, the no.24 seed, before one week ago in Kobe, losing to Korea's **Seo Hyowon**.

"Playing against Mima Ito is not like playing against a regular 14 year old..."

DEFEAT HURT

The defeat on home soil hurt. "*I am very happy, last week I lost very early at the Japan Open and I was very upset*", said **Ai Fukuhara**. "*I am glad that I was able to come here and make up for it and become the champion.*"

ELEVENTH FINAL

The champion and the champion for a fourth time in what is now eleven ITTF World





TESTING ENCOUNTER

No history of doubles success at senior level, 17 year old **Cho Seungmin** and 18 year old **Kim Minhyeok** extended the champions elect the full five games distance (9-11, 11-9, 11-8, 7-11, 11-6).

It was a testing encounter, a fact that **Kim Minseok** acknowledged.

"This match was tough, very tough", he said. "It is always very difficult to play against your team mates; we are glad we could get those last crucial points and win in front of our home crowd."

TOP OF LIST

Celebration, for **Jung Youngsik** and **Kim Minseok**, both 23 years old, it was more a sigh of relief.

However, there is cause for celebration. Subject to official confirmation, the win means the Korea duo now moves to the top of the Race to Lisbon Men's Doubles Standings (850 points); they replace Chinese Taipei's **Chiang Hung-Chieh** and **Huang Sheng-Sheng** in pole position (713 points).



AMAZING FEELING

*"It's the first time we have played **Cho Seungmin** and **Kim Minhyeok**", said **Jung Youngsik**. "Becoming champions is amazing, we are both very happy."*



Happy, they have every reason to be happy; in addition to ascending the heights in the Race to Lisbon, it is the first time as a partnership they have emerged as champions in an ITTF World Tour Men's Doubles event but not the first time with different Korean partners.

Kim Minseok won with **Seo Hyundeok** in Japan in 2012, **Jung Youngsik** with **Lee Sangsu** in Poland one year later.

EXCEEDS PREVIOUS RESULTS

However, the results exceeds by some distance their previous four exploits as a partnership on this year's GAC Group ITTF World Tour.

In Kuwait they were beaten in round one by China's **Fan Zhendong** and **Ma Long**, one week later in Qatar they suffered defeat in the third preliminary round, losing to Germany's **Patrick Franziska** and **Bastien Steger**; before, in the latter pairing's home country, enjoying their best performance of the year. In Bremen they reached the semi-final stage losing to Russia's **Kirill Skachkov** and Alexey Smirnov.

A promising result in Germany but last week in Japan, it was disappointment; they were forced to withdraw through an injury sustained by **Kim Minseok**. They were unable to fulfil their scheduled quarter-final duel against the combination of Portugal's **Tiago Apolonia** and Croatia's **Tan Ruiwu**.

QOROS 2015 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

Gold in Incheon and perhaps it was just a matter of time before the top step of the podium was reserved; notably at the recent Qoros 2015 World Championships they were just one place away from a medal.

They were beaten at the quarter-final stage by eventual runners up, China's **Fan Zhendong** and **Zhu Yu**.

In Incheon the medal did not escape, another partnership was added to the ITTF World Tour Roll of Honour, the names were Korean, those of **Jung Youngsik** and **Kim Minseok**.

GOLD FOR MIU HIRANO AND MIMA ITO, YOUNGEST FINAL EVER

Winners some seventh months ago at last year's prestigious Grand Finals in Bangkok, **Miu Hirano** and **Mima Ito** won the Women's Doubles title at the GAC Group 2015 ITTF World Tour Korea Open in the city of Incheon on Sunday 5th July.

The top seeds, in an all Japanese final, they beat colleagues, **Hina Hayata** and **Hitomi Sato** to secure the title, no.6 seeds providing stout resistance; the combination of the left handed attacking skills of **Hina Hayata** combined with the classic attributes of **Hitomi Sato** caused the champions elect a host of problems.

They had to recover from a two games to nil deficit to secure victory (8-11, 8-11, 11-5, 11-6, 11-9) in what was surely the youngest ever doubles final since the ITTF World Tour was christened in the English market town of Kettering in 1996.

AGES

At 17 years and 194 days old, **Hitomi Sato** was the senior citizen of the party; next in line came **Miu Hirano** who is 15 years and



82 days old, whilst **Hina Hayata** is 14 years and 364 days old.

She will celebrate her 15th birthday in two days, time on Tuesday 7th July. The youngest member of the quartet is **Mima Ito**; she is 14 years and 257 days old.

The combined age is younger than the vast majority of Junior Boys' Doubles and Junior Girls' Doubles finals on the ITTF Junior Circuit!

FIRST OF YEAR

"We are both very happy about winning another World Tour event; this is our first one of the year", said **Mima Ito**.

It is their third appearance of the year as a partnership; in Germany they were beaten in the opening round of proceedings by Russia's **Polina Mikhailova** and **Maria Dolgikh**; in Spain in the final by colleagues, **Ai Fukuhara** and **Misako Wakamiya**.

INITIAL MEETING

"This was the first time we have played against **Hina Hayata** and **Hitomi Sato** in a tournament", added **Mima Ito**. "We have trained with them many times; we have just never had a chance to play them." Most

"We are both very happy about winning another World Tour event..."

certainly **Hina Hayata** and **Hitomi Sato** proved most worthy opponents, a fact **Miu Hirano** was quick to acknowledge.

"We were nil-two down, which made us very nervous and we thought we were going to lose", she said. "We are relieved that we were able to fight back and win the match and become the champions."

APPEARANCES

It was for **Miu Hirano** and **Mima Ito**, their third career ITTF World Tour Women's Doubles title. In 2014 they had won in Germany and Spain.

Meanwhile, for **Hina Hayata** and **Hitomi Sato** it was by some distance their best performance.

They had been partners on only one previous occasion on the ITTF World Tour, earlier this year they were in harness in Germany; they beaten by the very narrowest of margins in the deciding fifth game in the preliminary stage by Korea's **Lee Seul** and **Lee Zion**.





BELARUS OPEN

SEIZING THE OPPORTUNITY, LI PING WINS MINSK MEN'S SINGLES TITLE

Runner up in 2007 at the Eurosib Russian Open in St Petersburg, when beaten by his compatriot at the time, China's **Chen Qi**; **Li Ping** won the Men's Singles title at the GAC Group 2015 ITTF World Tour Belarus Open on the late afternoon of Sunday 17th May.

Occupying the no.8 seeded position in Minsk, he accounted for Germany's **Ruwen Filus**, the no.4 seed, to arrest his first ever ITTF World Tour Men's Singles title and thus became the first player representing a Gulf State to secure such an accolade.

On duty for Qatar, he staved off a brave recovery by the German defender to record a six games success (11-5, 11-5, 11-7, 8-11, 10-12, 11-9).

FOURTH APPEARANCE

It was for **Li Ping** his fourth appearance of the year on the GAC Group 2015 ITTF World Tour and the move to Qatar has given him a second opportunity.

Notably at the GAC Group 2009 World Championships in Yokohama he won the Mixed Doubles title with **Cao Zhen** but such is the intensity of competition in China that international opportunities were precious gifts.



GRATEFUL FOR CHANCE

Watching **Li Ping** in action you can see from his expression that he is grateful for the opportunity that has been afforded by the Qatar Table Tennis Association.

Now he has repaid the support, having earlier in the year performed quite admirably on the Tour but perhaps not quite meeting the expectations of a player who owns the tag of being a World champion.

In Hungary at the start of the year he reached the quarter-final stage in Hungary losing to the athletic Korean, **Jeong Sangeun**; on home soil in Qatar he was beaten in the second round by Portugal's in form **Marcos Freitas**, whilst most recently in Spain, Japan's **Koki Niwa** halted aspirations in the third round.

SECOND DEFEAT

Success for **Li Ping**, for **Ruwen Filus** it was his second defeat of the day; earlier with **Ricardo Walther** it had been a reverse in the Men's Doubles final, beaten by the Danish partnership of **Jonathan Groth** and **Kasper Sternberg**.

Now, in the Men's Singles final it was the same outcome, the silver medal; nevertheless has he not done sufficient to nudge the German selectors that his name should be included on the team sheet for the forthcoming European Championships?

It was a first ever appearance for **Ruwen Filus** in an ITTF World Tour Men's Singles final.

MIMA ITO ONCE AGAIN, GERMAN SUCCESS REPEATED, ONLY IN BELARUS EXPECTED

Quarter-finalist in Suzhou at the Qoros 2015 World Championships, eventually beaten by the redoubtable Chinese star **Li Xiaoxia**; **Mima Ito** added to her list of successes by winning the Women's Singles title at the GAC Group 2015 ITTF World Tour Belarus Open in Minsk on Sunday 17th May.

Occupying the no.3 seeded position in the competition, in an all-Japanese final, she beat **Misako Wakamiya**, the no.6 seed, in four straight games (11-2, 13-11, 11-6, 11-7) to claim the title.

YOUNGEST EVER

Simply the win was expected, it was not a shock, it was not an upset, it was anticipated.

After becoming the youngest ever Women's Singles winner on the ITTF World Tour when she succeeded in Germany earlier this year at the age of 14 years 152 days



old, the achievements of **Mima Ito** are expected rather than unexpected!

OUTSTANDING RESULTS

Currently the results are astounding, the level of maturity quite amazing, a fact that was demonstrated clearly in the dramatic semi-final win against **Misaki Morizono**.

More and more she is in the spotlight, one wonders if that could be a danger, are we going to fall into the trap of expecting too much from **Mima Ito**?

She has now played in two ITTF World Tour Women's Singles finals, she has now won twice; is she a major threat to the current dominance of China or am I falling into the trap? Am I expecting too much from **Mima Ito**.

MISAKO WAKAMIYA

Meanwhile, for 26 year old **Misako Wakamiya**, who also enjoyed success in her tee-

nage days winning on the ITTF Junior Circuit in 2007 in South Africa and Cape Town, it was her fourth appearance in an ITTF World Tour Women's Singles final.

In 2012 she reached the final in the Czech Republic losing to Austria's **Liu Jia** in the final, two years later in Croatia it was against runners up spot, she was beaten by Monaco's **Yang Xiaoxin**.

WON IN HUNGARY

However, earlier this year in Hungary, she emerged victorious; she beat Hong Kong's **Lee Ho Ching** to claim the title.

The results mean that **Misako Wakamiya** is not very much in contention for the end of year Grand Finals but one player present in Minsk is in even greater contention.

Mima Ito will leapfrog Romania's **Elizabeta Samara** and move to the very top of the Standings and of course establishes yet another record; she will be the youngest ever play to own the top spot. She is 14 years and 208 days old.





GAC GROUP 2015 ITTF WORLD TOUR, ZAGREB (CROATIA) OPEN

SPANISH FORM MAINTAINED, MAHARU YOSHIMURA COLLECTS SECOND TITLE OF YEAR

The impressive winner in 2011 on the ITTF Junior Circuit in both France and Korea; since that time being able to produce the expected but equally able to suffer the unexpected, now Japan's 21 year old **Maharu Yoshimura** has seemingly come of age.

At the GAC Group 2015 ITTF World Tour Zagreb (Croatia) Open on Saturday 22nd May, he underlined that fact that he is now a more consistent, more mature and increasingly reliable player. The no.6 seed, he beat the host nation's **Tan Ruwui**, the no.13 seed, in six games (11-9, 9-11, 9-11, 11-6, 11-7, 11-8) to win his second career ITTF World Tour Men's Singles title.

An impressive performance, the win increases his chances of securing a place in the Standings that will result in an invitation to the prestigious Grand Finals to be held later in the year in Portugal.

SUCCESS IN ALMERIA

Earlier in the year, he won the Men's Singles title in Almeria at the GAC Group 2015 ITTF World Tour Spanish Open beating Hong Kong's **Wong Chun Ting** in the final on his second Tour appearance of the year.

The previous week in Germany had been beaten in the third preliminary round by Qatar's **Li Ping**; whilst in his one further appearance of the year, last week in Belarus, he reached the quarter-final round of the Men's Singles event losing to colleague **Mizuki Oikawa**.

Defeats but none could be considered shock defeats, **Li Ping** is a former member of the Chinese National Team and Mixed Doubles World champion in 2009 with **Cao Zhen**; also



results against colleague are never a true reflection of status or progress.

SILVER MEDAL IN SUZHOU

Furthermore, sandwiched in between his visits to Spain and Belarus, he reached the final of the Mixed Doubles event at the Qoros 2015 World Championships in Suzhou in partnership with **Kasumi Ishikawa**, the pair being beaten at final hurdle by the combination of China's **Xu Xin** and Korea's **Yang Haeun**.

*"After the tournament in Almeria, this is a second tournament that I won", said **Maharu Yoshimura**, "I'm happy of course; tactically I've played smart and this is the key of my victory in a final."*

ALSO POSSIBLE

Two ITTF World Tour Men's Singles finals and two wins; for **Tan Ruiwu** the same scenario was a possibility before the contest started. On his one and only previous appearance in an ITTF World Tour Men's Singles final he had emerged victorious, the occasion being Zagreb in 2012 when he beat colleague Roko Tosic in the final.

RETURN OF SERVICE

"Service, he only got services, nothing else", said a disgruntled **Tan Ruiwu**; needless to say it was the first time the two had ever met.

I would suggest that **Maharu Yoshimura** has more to his artillery but if you have services your opponent cannot return, isn't that as good idea? Wasn't it that a talent that helped make **Jan-Ove Waldner** a pretty good player?

SECOND MOST SUCCESSFUL

Success for **Maharu Yoshimura** means that in terms of ITTF World Tour Men's Singles titles he is the second most successful Japanese player of all time.

He now has two wins alongside **Kan Yo**, **Kaii Yoshida** and **Masato Shiono**, **Koki Niwa** has one such title to his credit with **Jun Mizutani** being the clear leader; he was won on four occasions.

UNBELIEVABLY HAPPY, CHOI HYOJOO ANNOUNCES ARRIVAL, WINS WOMEN'S SINGLES TITLE

New to the international scene, against the odds, Korea's **Choi Hyojoo** won the Women's Singles title at the GAC Group 2015 ITTF World Tour Zagreb (Croatia) Open on the late afternoon of Saturday 23rd May.

Not seeded, required to compete in the qualification stage, she accounted for Germany's **Shan Xiaona** at the final hurdle (11-5, 11-7, 7-11, 11-9, 11-3).

It was success for youth over experience, the name of **Choi Hyojoo** not being known outside national circles when the year began; the 17 year old entered the Women's World Rankings at no.95 in April and currently stands three places higher at no.92.



Conversely, **Shan Xiaona**, 32 years old, is listed at no.32, having one year ago in 2014 been as high as no.19 in April, May and June as well as in October.

MENTALLY AND TACTICALLY ASTUTE

"I am unbelievably happy; before Zagreb, I practised in Korea being helped by the coaches who are here with me", said **Choi Hyojoo**. "Mentally and tactically I think I was good, I made full use of every part of the table."

A quite incredible achievement and even more incredible when taken into consideration that the previous day she had won the Under 21 Women's Singles title beating Japan's **Hitomi Sato** in the final; whilst earlier on the concluding day, she had finished in runners up spot with **Jung Yumi** the Women's Doubles event.

TWO GOLD, ONE SILVER

The efforts of **Choi Hyojoo** more than match the names of notable Chinese players who have achieved the double of winning both the Under 21 Women's Singles and Wo-

men's Singles titles at an ITTF World Tour tournament.

Last year **He Zhuojia** won both titles in Argentina, one week later **Liu Xin** achieved the feat in Brazil; however, in both those tournaments there was no Women's Doubles event.

SURPASSES ALL OTHERS

Arguably the feat achieved by **Choi Hyojoo** surprises that of **He Zhuojia** and **Lin Xin**; it even can be considered to exceed the efforts of **Feng Yalan** at the German Open staged in Berlin in 2010.

On that occasion, **Feng Yalan** beat colleague **Wu Yang** in the final of the Under 21 Women's Singles event before overcoming **Ding Ning** the following day to secure the Women's Singles title.

However, in the Women's Doubles event, **Feng Yalan** did not enjoy success, partnering compatriot **Mu Zi**, the duo suffered defeat in the third preliminary round; they were beaten by Italy's **Nikoleta Stefanova** and **Wenling Tan Monfardini**.

EIGHTH KOREAN

Success for **Choi Hyojoo** means she becomes the eighth Korean to win an ITTF World Tour Women's Singles title; the others are **Dang Yeseo**, **Kim Kyungah**, **Lee Dasom**, **Lee Eunsil**, **Park Miyoung**, **Ryu Jihae** and **Seo Hyowon**.

Now add to the roll of honour a new name; add the name of **Choi Hyojoo**.



GAC GROUP 2015 ITTF WORLD TOUR, PHILIPPINES OPEN

SILVER TURNS TO GOLD, YUYA OSHIMA CROWNED PHILIPPINES MEN'S SINGLES CHAMPION

The runner up one day earlier when beaten by compatriot, **Tonin Ryuzaki**; Japan's 21 year old Yuya Oshima won the Men's Singles title at the GAC Group 2015 ITTF World Tour Philippines Open in Subic Bay on Sunday 31st May; in so brought matters to a conclusion.

Occupying the no.2 seeded position in the draw, he accounted for Korea's **Jung Youngsik**, the top seed, in four straight games (11-5, 11-7, 12-10, 11-9) to secure the first such title of his career and far exceed his previous best ITTF World Tour Men's Singles performance. Last year he reached the quarter-final stage of proceedings at the GAC Group 2015 ITTF World Tour Korea Open in Incheon.

EVIDENCE

Defeat in the round of the last eight in Incheon but the results gained supplied sufficient evidence that he was capable of commanding the top step of the podium.



Notably, he accounted for Korea's **Kim Min-seok**, Chinese Taipei's **Wu Chih-Chi** and Russia's **Alexander Shibaev**, before an inform Swede in the guise of **Kristian Karlsson** halted further progress.

AVENGED EARLIER DEFEAT

In Subic Bay it was three rungs higher up the ladder and there was an air of revenge as **Yuya Oshima** explained.

*"I played against him in Germany last March, so I made up my plan against **Jung Youngsik** carefully in advance", said **Yuya Oshima**. "So today is a measure of revenge for me."*

They met in the final preliminary round of the Men's Singles event; on that occasion **Jung Youngsik** won by the very narrowest of margins in a full distance seven games contest (4-11, 9-11, 11-8, 11-3, 12-10, 8-11, 12-10).

RECENT RESULTS

*"I haven't had good results for the past few months, so it is a great thing for me to win the title here; it will give me much more confidence", added **Yuya Oshima**. "I played very cool in my mind and it helped me so much in winning the title."*

Disappointed with his results but on his immediate two previous ITTF World Tour appearances this year, the defeats have all been against most worthy opponents.

In Zagreb after beating Denmark's **Claus Nielsen** in the opening round of the Men's Singles event, he was beaten by colleague, **Takuya Jin**; earlier in Spain he departed



in the same round. He accounted Korea's **Park Ganghyeon** before losing to Qatar's **Li Ping**, the eventual champion.

MEN'S DOUBLES TITLES

Furthermore, in Zagreb he won the Men's Doubles title with **Masataka Morizono**, a feat the pair had also achieved one year earlier at the GAC Group 2014 ITTF World Tour Czech Open,

Success in Subic Bay means that he now has two ITTF World Tour titles to his name this year, three in total; the most precious of all, the Men's Singles title at the GAC Group 2015 ITTF World Tour Philippines Open?

KASUMI ISHIKAWA MAKES MAJOR STRIDE TO TITLE DEFENCE, WINS IN PHILIPPINES

Winner last December in the Thai capital city of Bangkok at the US\$ 1,000,000 GAC Group 2014 ITTF World Tour Grand Finals, 22 year old Kasumi Ishikawa made a major stride forward in Subic Bay on Sunday 31st May in her quest to qualify once again for the prestigious end of year competition; the tournament will be held in December in Portugal.

She emerged as the winner of the Women's Singles event at the GAC Group 2015 ITTF World Tour Philippines Open, overcoming

Ai Fukuhara in a contest where the top seed prevailed again the player next in the order of merit.

Kasumi Ishikawa won in six games (7-11, 11-8, 11-8, 9-11, 8-11, 11-5, 11-8) and thus repeated the success she had enjoyed, against her Japanese colleague, when they had met at the quarter-final stage in Bangkok.

FIRST SINCE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

*"It is my first tournament since the World Championships; I did a great deal of training and really prepared well for this tournament", said **Kasumi Ishikawa**. "In the final, it was a very, very tough match against **Ai Fukuhara** but I set my mind well and felt no pressure even though I dropped the first game; my mental preparation was good today."*

PREVIOUS MEETING

Success in Subic Bay meant that in World Ranking tournaments **Kasumi Ishikawa** has now won three of their four meetings.

In addition to the success in Bangkok, where she dominated matters to win in four straight games; earlier in the year she had beaten **Ai Fukuhara** in a full distance seven games duel in the final of the Wo-

men's Singles event at the GAC Group 2014 ITTF World Tour Airports of Regions Russian Open in Ekaterinburg.

The one win for **Ai Fukuhara** had been achieved on the first international meeting. At the 2011 Japan Open, **Ai Fukuhara** had won in four straight games in their Women's Singles semi-final encounter.

MANY MEETINGS

However, those results are only in international competition; domestically they have met many times; a fact which **Kasumi Ishikawa** was well aware.

*"We have played so many times before and we know each other's styles of play", added **Kasumi Ishikawa**. "So today, it was **Kasumi Ishikawa** that won the match mentally."*

ENDS DISAPPOINTING RUN

Gold for **Kasumi Ishikawa**, a result that brings to an end a series of somewhat unexpected defeats on this year's GAC Group 2014 ITTF World Tour.

The top seed in both Germany and Spain, in the former she was beaten by the host nation's **Petrissa Solja** at the quarter-final stage, in Spain in the third round by Hong Kong's **Doo Hoi Kem**.

APPEARANCES

It was the ninth time that **Ai Fukuhara** had appeared in an ITTF World Tour Women's Singles final, it was the seventh time she had suffered defeat; for **Kasumi Ishikawa** it was the sixth occasion in the gold medal match and the fourth victory.

The previous wins were in Rabat in 2011, Santiago in 2011 and last year in Ekaterinburg.





GAC GROUP 2015 ITTF WORLD TOUR, AUSTRALIA OPEN

WISER FROM EXPERIENCE, JUNG YOUNGSIK WINS AUSTRALIAN TITLE IN STYLE

Athletic in the best traditions of his country, Korea's **Jung Youngsik** won the Men's Singles title at the GAC Group 2015 Australia Open in Tweed Heads on Sunday 7th June.

The top seed and favourite for the title, he beat Hong Kong's **Ho Kwan Kit** at the final hurdle (11-8, 11-5, 12-10, 11-6) to record a result that could well prove a watershed in his career. One week ago in the Philippines he had reached the final, losing in four straight games to Japan's **Yuya Oshima** when also occupying the top seeded position in the competition; he had not done himself justice.



CONTRASTING PERFORMANCE

Undoubtedly in Tweed Heads he was the wiser for the experience and completely transformed, what could be considered a disappointing performance, into an exhilarating enactment.

"I lost four-nil in the final at the Philippines Open; therefore I tried even harder this time; I told myself I have to win the first game, after I won the first game I felt more confident", said **Jung Youngsik**. *"I am very happy, I will have party with my family and friends when I back to Korea."*

In his second career ITTF World Tour Men's Singles semi-final, he was more accustomed to the scenario of the final, as he enhanced his claim for a place in the end of year GAC Group 2015 ITTF World Tour Grand Finals to be staged in Portugal.

FIVE APPEARANCES

The win means that he will increase his points total from 275 to 375 which elevates him in fifth place behind most illustrious company in the guise of **Ma Long**, **Vladimir Samsonov**, **Dimitrij Ovtcharov** and **Zhang Jike**.



Additionally, it also means that he becomes the leading player on the Men's Singles Standings to have completed the mandatory five appearance criteria to qualify for the Finals.

Earlier this year he competed in Kuwait, Qatar and Germany prior to his excursion to the Philippines.

NOTEWORTHY PERFORMANCES

Furthermore, his departure has been against most notable adversaries.

In Qatar and Germany he was beaten by **Dimitrij Ovtcharov**; whilst in Kuwait it was a quarter-final exit at the hands of **Xu Xin**.

Notably in Qatar, in their quarter-final duel, he extended **Dimitrij Ovtcharov** the full seven games distance; whilst in the third round of the Men's Singles event at the Qoros 2015 World Championships, he won the first three games against **Jun Mizutani** before experiencing defeat.

NEVER RELAXED GRIP

At the GAC Group 2015 Australia Open, **Jung Youngsik** never relaxed the grip against **Ho Kwan Kit**, a player who was competing in his second career ITTF World Tour Men's Singles final and against an adversary he had never previously confronted.

The top step of the podium and bright smile belonged to the 23 year old Korean; a new name was added to the ITTF World Tour Men's Singles Roll of Honour, the name of **Jung Youngsik**.



SUCCESS IN TWEED HEADS, AI FUKUHARA TURNS SILVER TO GOLD

Beaten the previous week in the final in the Philippines by colleague **Kasumi Ishikawa**, Japan's **Ai Fukuhara** won the Women's Singles title at the GAC Group 2015 ITTF World Tour Australia Open in Tweed Heads on Sunday 7th June.



The no.2 seed, as she had been the previous week, she beat Korea's **Jeon Jihee**, the no.7 seed, in five games to arrest the title (6-11, 11-2, 11-7, 11-5, 11-6) and thus brought to an end a series of finals where she has concluded matters as the bridesmaid. Following her success in Yokohama in 2013, her second career ITTF World Tour Women's Singles title, her first being in Rabat in 2009, it has been so near yet so far for the 26 year old.

SECOND STEP OF PODIUM

Later in 2013 she was the runner up in Germany, beaten by China's **Wen Jia**, before last year suffering a similar fate in the Czech Republic and Russia; in the former she was beaten in the final by Romania's **Elizabeta Samara**, in the latter by **Kasumi Ishikawa**.



SOMEWHAT DISAPPOINTING

Equally, the win concludes what has been a relatively disappointing year on the international scene.

On the GAC Group 2015 ITTF World Tour she departed proceedings in the opening round in Germany, before performing somewhat better in Spain. In Almeria she advanced to the semi-final, prior to suffering a second early exit of the year, in Croatia she bid farewell in round two.

Always she experienced defeat at the hands of most worthy opponents but always against a lower ranked adversary. In Germany she was beaten by Hong Kong's **Doo Hoi Kem**, in Spain by compatriot **Sayaka Hirano**, before in Croatia losing to Luxembourg's **Ni Xialian**.

SUZHOU

Also, at the Qoros 2015 World Championships in Suzhou it was an earlier than anticipated departure, she experienced defeat at the hands of Ukraine's **Tetyana Bilenko**.

PREVIOUS MEETING

Success in Tweed Heads and it was not unexpected success; the two had met on one previous occasion, in the third round of the Women's Singles event at the GAC Group 2013 ITTF World Tour Korea Open. On that occasion **Ai Fukuhara** had won in four straight games.



*"I did not have lunch before the match as I thought it might affect my performance; I remember I'd player her before and won four-nil", said **Ai Fukuhara**. "I was a little nervous in the first game; after one-all I tried not to play too safe and believe in myself."*

APPEARANCES

Overall for **Jeon Jihee** it was her third ITTF World Tour Women's Singles final, her first defeat; for **Ai Fukuhara** it was her ninth such final, her third success.





2015 1ST EUROPEAN GAMES

TITLE SECURED, ONCE AGAIN DIMITRIJ OVTCHAROV DEMONSTRATES DISTINCT LIKING FOR BAKU

The winner earlier in the year in Baku at the NN Table Tennis Club 2015 Europe Top 16; once again, on Friday 19th June, Germany's **Dimitrij Ovtcharov** showed his liking for the capital city of Azerbaijan.

Occupying the top seeded position in the draw; the 26 year old accounted **Vladimir Samsonov** of Belarus, the no.3 seed, in a full distance seven games duel (10-12, 7-11, 11-9, 11-3, 9-11, 11-7, 11-8), to secure the Men's Singles title at the 2015 European Games title.



"My friend Vladimir also deserved to win; he pushed me to the limits."

SOURCE OF MOTIVATION

"After the team event I went to the German House here in Baku", reflected **Dimitrij Ovtcharov**. "I took a good look at the medals that the girls won; their gold gave me extra motivation."

Germany had finished in fourth place in the Men's Team event but had been hampered by the fact that from the quarter-finals onwards they were without **Timo Boll** owing to illness and had to compete with only two players.

"We had a disappointing team event, not because we played badly but because of rule that that does not allow replacements", stressed **Dimitrij Ovtcharov**. "In the singles I suffered from a pain in my back at the beginning, I was not sure how I would pay; at the end everything fell into place."

REVERSED QATAR RESULT

Success for **Dimitrij Ovtcharov** meant that he reversed the result of four months ago when he had lost to **Vladimir Samsonov** in the final of the Men's Singles event at the GAC Group 2015 ITTF World Tour Qatar Open in February,

However, the win recorded by **Dimitrij Ovtcharov** in Baku is only the third time he has won in what is now nine meetings in World ranking events. In 2009 at the quarter-final stage of the Volkswagen 2009 Tournament of Champions, **Dimitrij Ovtcharov** succeeded; later he won in the final of the Men's Team event at the Liebherr 2013 European Championships when Germany faced Belarus.

SOBERING THOUGHT

Otherwise, prior to today's Baku final, the verdict has always gone to **Vladimir Samsonov** but when making the comparison one must consider the age difference.

Vladimir Samsonov is now 39 years old; in fact he is old enough, or should that be young enough, to play in the World Veteran Championships next year! The tournament will be held in Spain where he lives!

Now of that doesn't make you feel old, nothing will!

Furthermore, when taking into account recent contests, **Dimitrij Ovtcharov** has now won two of the last three meetings; in Baku he was well aware he had succeeded in a very testing encounter.

DIFFICULT MATCH

"Today we had a very difficult and long match", added **Dimitrij Ovtcharov**. "My friend **Vladimir** also deserved to win; he pushed me to the limits."

Both **Dimitrij Ovtcharov** and **Vladimir Samsonov** play for the Russian club Fakel Gazproma Orenburg,

STRANGE MATCH

Defeat for **Vladimir Samsonov** but as always he was gracious in defeat

*"It was strange opening game, I had 7-1, then it was a close finish", said the silver medallist. "I won the next game but it is so hard to keep in that pace against **Dimitrij**."*

FULL HOUSE

Success in Baku in February and now in June; it means that **Dimitrij Ovtcharov** holds all three major European Men's Singles titles. In October 2013 he won the Men's Singles title at the European Championships in Schwechat, Austria. No doubt he will defend that title later in the year in Ekaterinburg.

Three European titles but most pertinently, the win at the 2015 European Games opens a door; **Dimitrij Ovtcharov** is South America bound, he qualifies for the Rio 2016 Olympic Games.

"My friend Vladimir also deserved to win; he pushed me to the limits."

RESPONDING TO PRESSURE AND EXERTING PRESSURE, BRONZE MEDAL FOR KOU LEI

Not seeded, Ukraine's **Kou Lei** excelled expectations to secure the bronze medal in the Men's Singles event at the 2015 European Games in Baku, Azerbaijan on Friday 19th June; having earlier in the day suffered a semi-final defeat at the hands of **Vladimir Samsonov** of Belarus, the no.3 seed; **Kou Lei** overcame Great Britain's **Paul Drinkhall**, to secure the third step of the medal podium.



In a hard fought contest **Kou Lei** emerged successful in six games, the game that brought matters to a conclusion being one of epic proportions [5-11, 11-7, 11-7, 11-5, 5-11, 22-20].

CRUCIAL SECOND GAME

*"I was under pressure knowing that I am playing for the medal, I lost the opening game; it was crucial that I managed to win the second and level", said **Kou Lei**. "My backhand started working, it was a very close match, every point was very important and I only won in the final moments."*

Born in Beijing, a former member of the Chinese National Junior Second Team before moving to England for a two year period between 2002 and 2004; the strength of **Kou Lei** is very much his extremely smooth forehand. He is consistent from the backhand rather than explosive strokes.

*"I had to vary my play, changing direction, changing my service, changing the way I play", continued **Kou Lei**.*

GOOD PERFORMANCES EARLIER IN THE YEAR

Currently listed at no.61 on the Men's World Rankings, having one month earlier reached a career high of no.58; the performance in Baku represent consistent if not dynamic progress by the 27 year old. Earlier in the year at the GAC Group 2015 ITTF World Tour Hungarian Open he reached the



quarter-final stage of the Men's Singles event, eventually losing to Poland's **Daniel Gorak**, before more recently at the Qoros 2015 World Championships in Suzhou advancing to the fourth round.

On that occasion, he was beaten by Germany's **Patrick Franziska** but notably en route, he accounted for Ecuador's **Alberto Miño**, **Bastian Steger** also from Germany and Hungary's **Adam Pattantyus**."

NEED TO MAINTAIN HIGH LEVEL

Defeat for **Paul Drinkhall** but being the no.16 seed, fourth place was a most creditable finish.

*"**Kou Lei** played well, he made no easy mistakes", reflected **Paul Drinkhall**. "Against him you must play at the highest level all the time, he keeps you under constant pressure."*

MARK OF DISTINCTION

The pressure imposed by **Kou Lei** prevailed and in so doing he gained a mark of distinction.

He ended the tournament as the only non-seeded player in the table tennis events to secure a medal.

CHARGE OF THE OLD GUARD, OLDEST TEENAGER IN TOWN CAUSES FIRST ROUND UPSET

Indefatigable, inveterate, ir-repressible but never irres-ponsible, impudent or ir-reverent; now 45 years old **Jean-Saive** caused the biggest upset in the first round of the Men's Singles event at the 2015 European Games in Baku, Azerbaijan on Tuesday 16th June.





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Showing the same enthusiasm that saw him win the Cadet Boys' Singles title at the European Youth Championships in the Austrian city of Linz in 1984; the incorrigible Belgian overcame Russia's 27 year old **Kirill Skachkov** in five games (11-9, 10-12, 11-9, 11-8, 11-5) to book his place in the second round of proceedings.

Once at the top of the list, **Jean-Michel Saive** presently stands at no.135 on the Men's World Rankings, **Kirill Skachkov** is at no.56.

*"I am like a kid here; I have nothing more to prove, I am not quite sure what players think when they play old **Saive**", said the Belgian legend. "Maybe they think it's easier because I'm getting old but also they know I know how to win."*

MEDALLIST IN LINZ

Success for one member of the old guard, there was success for another but according to expectations. **Kalinikos Kreanga**, now 43 years old, accounted for **Jean-Michel Saive**'s compatriot **Cedric Nuytinck** in a hard fought seven games duel (13-11, 8-11, 11-7, 10-12, 7-11, 11-5, 11-6).

Like **Jean-Michel Saive**, the Greek star gained a place on medal podium in Linz 31 years ago. In those days representing his native Romania and known as **Calin Creanga**, he was the runner up in the Cadet Boys' Doubles event with **Romulus Revisz**.

Two years later in the Belgium city of Louvain La Neuve, he won the Cadet Boys' Singles title.

MEN'S TEAM

Winners on home soil at the TMS 2014 European Team Championships in Lisbon nine months ago, Portugal beat France to win the Men's Team title at the 2015 European Games in Baku on Monday 15th June; furthermore they succeeded without the services of the injured **João Monteiro**, the player who had proved crucial to the victory last September.

In the guise of 19 year old **João Geraldo** they found a more than adequate replacement; his record, his contribution to the success was great as those of his more established colleagues **Tiago Apolonia** and **Marcos Freitas**.

Notably, he was the only member of the trio not to lose a singles match!

DOUBLES REVERSE IN FINAL

The only defeat for the teenager came in the final when partnering **Tiago Apolonia** in the doubles contest against **Simon Gauzy** and **Emmanuel Lebesson**.

The pair suffered a full distance five games defeat (11-5, 11-6, 11-13, 10-12, 11-6), after **Tiago Apolonia** had beaten **Adrien Matenet** in three straight games (13-11, 11-9, 11-6) and **Marco Freitas** had won a full distance contest in opposition to **Simon Gauzy** (11-8, 10-12, 11-8, 9-11, 11-5).

SEIZED OPPORTUNITIES

Defeat in the doubles for **João Geraldo** but there was to be no such outcome in the



singles; he beat **Adrien Mattenet** in three straight games (11-4, 12-10, 11-8). Super sub sealed the victory.

*"I was little bit nervous, like everybody else", said **João Geraldo**. "I took my chances, I attacked."*

TIAGO APOLONIA GAVE PERFECT START

An impressive finish, from **Tiago Apolonia**, it was an impressive start.

Two days earlier, he had suffered defeat in the opening round against Constantin Cioti in the clash against Romania; there was to be no such repeat in the final, his win over **Adrien Mattenet** gave Portugal the perfect start.

*"We know each other very well, we play together in Saarbrücken in German Bundesliga so it was very close match, as I expected; especially the two opening games were close", said **Tiago Apolonia**. "When I won the second game it gave me added confidence to finish the match, I was less tense."*

LOST CONCENTRATION

A hard fought win for **Tiago Apolonia**, it was even harder for **Marcos Freitas** against Smon **Gauzy**.

*"In the past few years we have played many matches against each other; he has improved, he is very dangerous player", reflected **Marcos Freitas**. "I won the opening game but when I lost the second after being ahead 8-3 I lost my focus, I became nervous and that affected my game further; luckily I managed to calm down and ended the duel in my favour."*



WOMEN'S TEAM

Top seeds Germany, won the Women's Team title at the 2015 European Games in Baku, Azerbaijan on Monday 15th June but for the first time in the tournament they were tested.

Three matches nil wins had been the victory margin in each round on their way to the gold medal contest; in the final it was a very different matter, they were stretched the full five match distance by the Netherlands, an outfit who were no strangers to the scenario.

At both the quarter-final and semi-final stages they had needed five matches to secure victory.

PIVOTAL CONTEST

Crucial to the German success, the pivotal contest was the doubles, the third match of the fixture. It was the one duel that required five games to determine the outcome.

Shan Xiaona and **Petrissa Solja** beat **Li Jiao** and **Britt Eerland** (8-11, 11-7, 11-9, 7-11, 11-7) to turn the tide in favour of Germany, after **Li Jiao** had given the Netherlands the dream start.





DEFENCE PREVAILS

She accounted for **Han Ying** in three straight games (11-9, 12-10, 11-5), before **Shan Xiaona** levelled matters by overcoming **Li Jie** with the loss of the second game (11-4, 8-11, 11-8, 11-5). Defeat in for **Li Jie** in the second match of the fixture but in the fourth it was success; she beat **Petrissa Solja** in three straight games to level proceedings (11-8, 11-7, 11-9).

The defensive skills of **Li Jie** had proved too solid, too safe, too reliable for **Petrissa Solja**; in the decisive concluding match of the engagement it was the same scenario; only this time in favour of Germany.

Han Xing, her backspin artistry exquisite, overcame **Britt Eerland** in three straight games (11-1, 11-2, 11-6) to seal the contest.

NERVES

"I was very nervous before the match, I was under enormous pressure", reflected **Han Ying** with regards to her defeat at the hands of **Li Jiao**.

*"I hope I can play against **Li Jiao** again very soon"*, added a very determined **Han Ying**, who is one of most charming ladies you could wish to meet. However, like all sporting personalities of note, defeat when you believe you have not performed the best of your ability is a dagger in the heart.

"I doubt she will beat me like she did today", added **Han Ying**. *"For sure it will not be three-nil."*

ADDED PRESSURE

Han Ying is the team leader, at the TMS 2014 European Team Championships, after the final against Austria when she had been stretched to the limit by **Liu Jia**; national coach **Jie Schöpp** explained *"Han Ying never loses"*.

In Baku she suffered a rare defeat and admitted that the fact she was playing for the team added a great deal of pressure.

"It is much easier when you play in singles, you are on your own", explained **Han Ying**. *"When you play for your team and for your country it brings a lot of pressure; after I lost opening match I was happy that I had*

a chance to play in the decisive one, to contribute to the victory."

Spare a thought for **Britt Eerland**; she could not have chosen a worse time to play **Han Ying**.

UNCOMFORTABLE SITUATION

Defeat for **Han Ying** in the opening contest, the reverse increased the pressure on the shoulders of **Shan Xiaona** as she faced **Li Jie**.

"Han Ying had lost, I was very nervous; it was not very comfortable situation", said **Shan Xiaona**. She emerged victorious and the partnered **Petrissa Solja**, the match that in her opinion sealed the victory.



THE DOUBLES

*"When we won it I knew it is over, I knew we would win gold, I was very focused in the doubles and I played much better than in the match against **Li Jie**"*, continued **Shan Xiaona**. *"We were sure **Han Ying** would seal the match."*

Impressively, **Han Ying** obliged, for **Jie Schöpp** it was mission accomplished.

"For us, the most difficult part was to play in a system which is not often used", she said. *"We face this system only at the Olym-*

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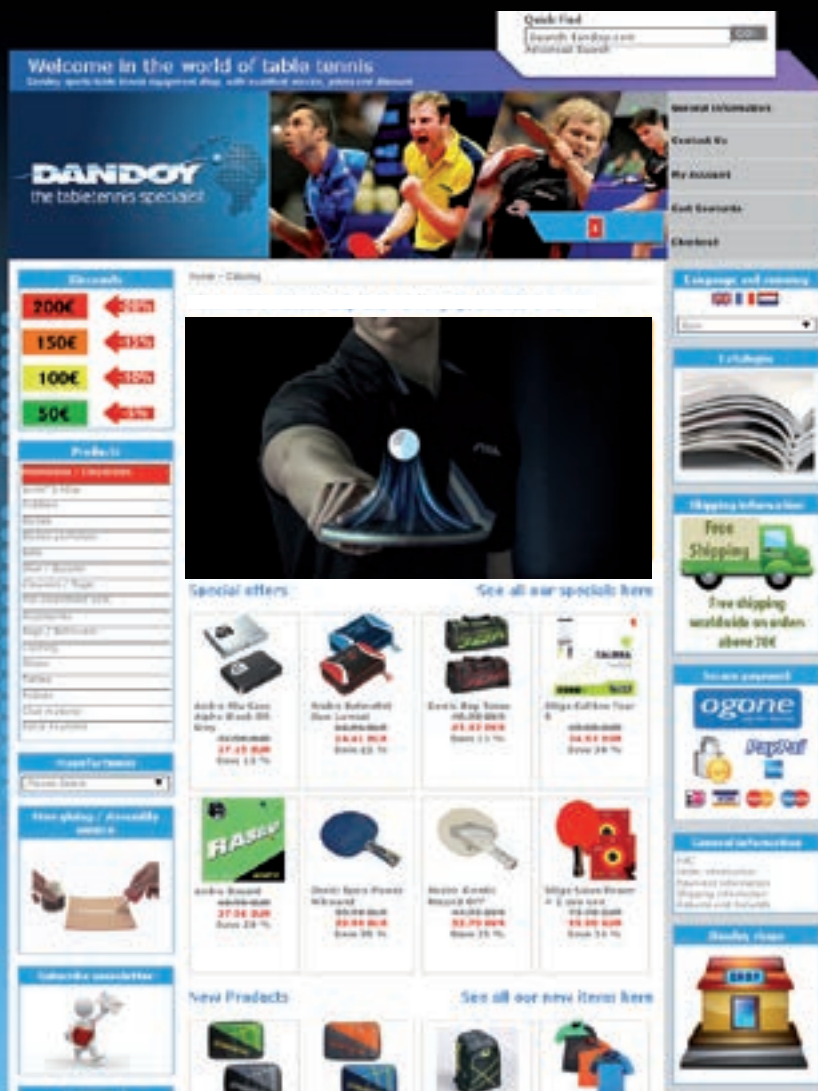
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pics; that is why it was much harder than at the European Championships."

STILL A MAJOR FORCE

Defeat for the Netherlands but most worthy adversaries and **Li Jiao**, at 42 years of age, proved she is still a major force on the international scene.

*"I have not played at international level since Tokyo last year", said **Li Jiao**. "I had to play clever, I had to outplay my adversary in the mind game and that was not easy task; **Han Ying** is also A very clever player but I always play well against defence and that helped."*

Play clever, sounds just like another penhold grip left hander. *"Play smart"* is the theory of Spain's 53 year old **He Zhiwen**.

COACHING ROLE CHANGES APPROACH

A return to international duty for **Li Jiao** who did play in the TMS 2014 European Championships in Lisbon which followed the ZEN-HOH World Championships in Tokyo but she only played in one match.

She was beaten by Dora Madarasz in the three-one defeat against Hungary in the group stage of proceedings and then never played again. She focused her attentions on coaching the Netherlands Men's Team; the role she currently fulfils and has had effect on her attitude to playing.

*"Now I see things differently, before I was nervous and I needed a lot of time to calm down", explained **Li Jiao**. "Now I realise the adversary is as nervous as I am and it is easier to prepare myself; today we played well but at the end it was very difficult for **Britt Eerland** to beat **Han Ying**."*

TIRED TEAM

It was a fine effort and the performance pleased **Elena Timina**, the Netherlands National Coach. *"I am sure that the duel between **Li Jiao** and **Han Ying** was the match of the tournament, the quality was*

*fantastic; also **Li Jie** was also good against **Shan Xiaona** but other factors affected her", said **Elena Timina**. "At one game each and 7-7, a stage of the match when she was playing really well, she called "Time Out"; I asked why, she said "I cannot see anything, everything is black in front of me", she was too tired."*

Fatigue, **Elena Timina** was convinced that factor influenced the outcome in the final.

SIX HOURS MORE

*"Overall, Germany, with their three three-nil victories, played for something like two and half hours on their way to the final, we played for eight and half hours", explained **Elena Timina**. "The girls were just tired."*



Nevertheless **Elena Timina** was gracious as always in defeat but like **Jie Schöpp** had reservations about the format of the matches.

*"First of all, congratulations to Germany on their quality and ability to beat all adversaries three-nil", concluded **Elena Timina**. "A problem with this system is it does not allow many tactics, I was forced to put Britt to play decisive match."*

PROVED POINT

Success for Portugal and **Tiago Apolonia** was very clear that a point had been proven. *"We proved that the success at the European Championships was not accidental", he stressed. "We had magical moments in Lisbon and we succeeded in Baku as well."*

EMMANUEL LEBESSON UNBEATEN

Delight for **Tiago Apolonia**; for the French players it was understandable disappointment..



*"Maybe tomorrow this silver will look better, but now it is hard for us to take," said **Emmanuel Lebesson**, who could reflect on a first class effort.*

He had remained unbeaten throughout the three days and had accounted for both **Vladimir Samsonov** and **Dimitrij Ovtcharov** en route to the final.

IMPORTANT FIRST ROUND SUCCESS

Disappointment but when the draw was published, French thoughts were not focused on a podium finish but on beating a team that had proved a nemesis in the past.. *"After four defeats against Greece, we finally beat them", reflected **Simon Gauzy**. "We beat them in the first round, it was turning point."*



LI JIAO ADDS TO EUROPEAN TITLES, WOMEN'S SINGLES GOLD, SILVER FOR LI JIE

The no.10 seed, **Li Jiao** won the Women's Singles event at the 2015 European Games in Baku on Friday 19th June; in an all Netherlands final she beat colleague **Li Jie**, the no.6 seed, in four straight games (13-11, 11-5, 12-10, 11-5) to arrest the title.

Success meant she became not only the first ever winner of the event and added to her European collection of honours; also she secured her place in the Rio 2016 Olympic Games.

MORE EUROPEAN TITLES

Now the golden total reads six. She led the Netherlands to the top prize in the Women's Team event at the European Championships in 2008 in St Petersburg, the following year in Stuttgart and in 2011 in Gdansk.

Furthermore in 2007 in Belgrade in four years later in Gdansk she donned the Women's Singles crown; left handed, pen-hold grip, her excellence in service and first attack plus creating wide angles from the backhand prevailing secured success at the European Championships. It was the same at the inaugural European Games.

"I performed at my best level, I feel like I am 18 again."



UNBEATEN THROUGHOUT

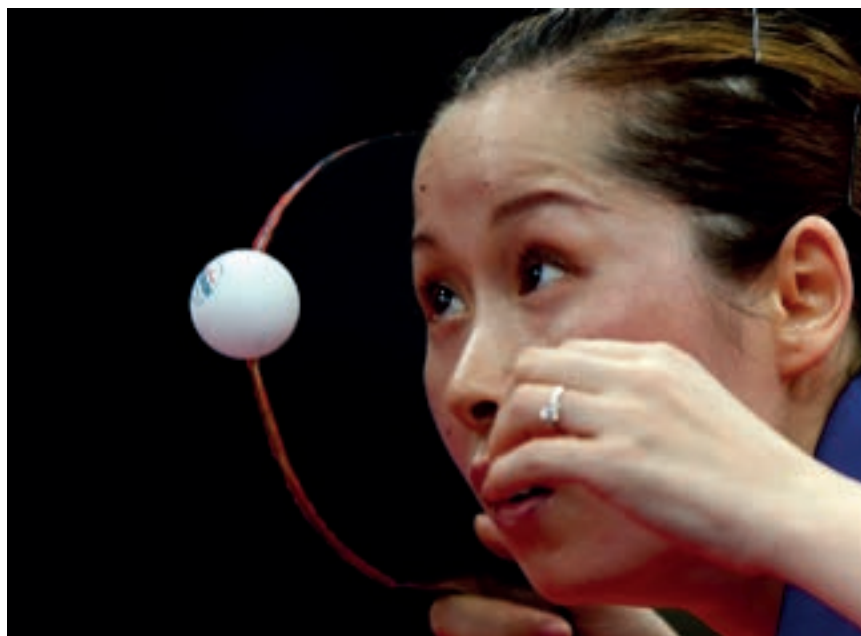
Throughout the tournament **Li Jiao** demonstrated consistently good form being unbeaten in singles matches in the Women's Team event earlier in the week, pivotal to the Netherlands success.

*"Our aim was to secure good result here, we had very good preparation; in the past three weeks, I trained hard and I dedicated myself full time to be ready for the challenge in Baku," explained **Li Jiao** whose current task in the Netherlands is to be the coach of the Men's Team.*

DIFFICULT START

*"I performed at my best level, I feel like I am 18 again; I had a little bit of a shaky start in Baku", added **Li Jiao**. "It was difficult to overcome **Yana Noskova** at the beginning, but later everything was easier."*

Not required to compete in the opening round, in the second round **Li Jiao** had beaten **Yana Noskova** by the very narrowest of margins in the decisive seventh game (11-7, 11-13, 11-7, 12-10, 10-12, 10-12, 11-9).



"I have never managed to beat."

MENTALLY TESTING

There were to be no more moments of drama for the 42 year old. *"The match against **Li Jie** was mentally difficult, we have known each other for 16 years"* continued **Li Jiao**. *"I had to think about it like it is just another match."* It was a result as history predicted.

*"At the Dutch Championships we have met each other a dozen times", said **Li Jie**. "I have never managed to beat."*

MAJOR UPSET

Defeat in the final in Baku but en route to the final, **Li Jie** had caused one of the biggest upsets of the tournament by beating Germany's **Han Ying**, the top seeds, in the quarter-finals. *"I had never played **Han Ying** before", explained **Li Jie**. "I was not confident before that match; it was very difficult."*

MOMENT OF PRIDE

The hurdle was overcome and much credit must go to **Elena Timina**, the coach sitting courtside.

Undoubtedly, for her to see the top two steps of the Women's Singles podium belong to the Netherlands it was a moment of pride; for **Li Jie** a moment of satisfaction for **Li Jie**, for **Li Jiao** a moment of celebration for **Li Jiao**.



RENAISSANCE CONTINUES, HU MELEK SECURE WOMEN'S SINGLES BRONZE

Crowned Mediterranean champion in 2009 and a most creditable quarter-finalist at the Liebherr 2013 World Championships, Turkey's **Hu Melek** secured the bronze medal in the Women's Singles event at the 2015 European Games in the Azerbaijan capital city of Baku on the early evening of Friday 19th June.

The no.8 seed, she accounted for the Slovak Republic's **Eva Odorova** in five games (12-10, 12-10, 11-8, 11-13, 11-7) to secure the third step of the podium.

FIRST MEETING

*"We do not know each other, I had never played against **Eva** before; I received a few tips from the coaches and the players before the match but there is a big difference when you actually play against someone", reflected **Hu Melek**. "It took me two games to read her play; in third, I felt a little more relaxed but in the fourth **Eva** changed her tactics."*

A change of tactics but **Hu Melek** did have the opportunity to conclude matters.

"I saved two game points and levelled to 10-10 and then I had a match point; I thought this is the end but I did not put enough of power in my stroke, just blocked and it



*opened the door for **Eva**", added **Hu Melek**. "She seized the opportunity and won that game; I am happy that I managed to seal the match after, in the next game."*

TOUGH AGAINST DEFENDERS

Success against **Eva Odorova** came after a semi-final reverse in opposition to **Li Jiao** and a very tough penultimate day in order to reach the last four. In the third round and quarter-finals, she had to overcome defenders.

*"I am not good against them, I do not have enough power", explained **Hu Melek**. "Yesterday I played against **Li Qian** and **Tetyana Bilenko** and I injured my shoulder; earlier today I made many forehand mistakes against **Li Jiao**, which is why I lost."*

RETURN TO FORM

Meanwhile, for **Hu Melek**, the no.8 seed, it was a result better than could have been anticipated. The eventual outcome represented a continuation of a recent return to form.

On her most recent appearance on the GAC Group 2015 ITTF World Tour, in the Croatian capital city of Zagreb, she had acquitted herself well. She had beaten Japan's **Yui Hamamoto** in the opening round before causing an upset of note when she had overcome **Sayaka Hirano**, also from Japan to reach the quarter-final stage where Korea's **Yang Haeun** ended progress.



ENDED DISAPPOINTING RUN

The last eight finish in Zagreb ended a disappointing run of form.

On the GAC Group 2015 ITTF World Tour she had suffered first round exits in both Kuwait and Qatar; in the former she was beaten by Hong Kong's **Doo Hoi Kem**, in the latter by Chinese Taipei's **Huang Yi-Hua**.

Likewise, at the Qoros 2015 World Championships, it was arguably an earlier exit than had been anticipated; she departed in round two of the Women's Singles event, beaten by Ukraine's **Margaryta Pesotska**

NOT SEEDED

Defeat for **Eva Odorova**, fourth place, one step short of a precious medal is regarded by many as the most agonising position in which to finish a competition.

However, **Eva Odorova** can take solace in the fact that she was not seeded and excelled all expectations; a semi-final finish was a most worthy achievement.



2015 ITTF NORTH AMERICA CUP

THE DIFFERENCE ONE YEAR MAKES, A DIFFERENCE OF THREE DECADES

One year ago in Burnaby it was a 14 year old who emerged successful, one year later it was a 44 year old; in 2014 **Kanak Jha** of the United States became the youngest ever winner. At the 2015 ITTF-North America Cup in Markham, Toronto on the evening of Sunday 17th May, **Jim Butler**, likewise from the United States, became the oldest ever champion.

Occupying the no.4 seeded position in the draw, at the final hurdle he beat colleague **Timothy Wang**, the top seed, to claim the title (11-5, 11-6, 8-11, 11-8, 10-12, 11-8), after some 90 minutes earlier having won a titanic duel against Canada's **Pierre-Luc Theriault**, the no.2 seed (11-8, 12-10, 4-11, 11-9, 3-11, 7-11, 18-16).

STAVED OFF RECOVERY

In the counterpart Men's Singles semi-final, **Timothy Wang** emerged successful in a contest that was as tense as the **Pierre-Luc Theriault** versus **Jimmy Butler** epic.

He ended the reign of **Kanak Jha**, the no.3 seed in Markham, staving off a brave recovery by the teenager to emerge victorious in seven games (11-8, 11-9, 14-12, 8-11, 1-11, 8-11, 11-5). In the third place contest **Pierre-Luc Theriault** beat **Kanak Jha** (11-9, 8-11, 11-8, 11-7).

TABLE TENNIS HEAVEN

"Winning this title is one of the best titles of my career and the most amazing feeling; it feels like I'm in table tennis heaven!" said **Jimmy Butler**. *"I have never won a big North American title, I have been the runner up at four North American Championships in the past and so this victory is simply amazing!"*





Playing intelligently, lethal with a fast backhand, consistent with a carefully guided forehand top spin and when required to block secure, **Jimmy Butler** used his experience to good effect.

PLAYING SAFE

"I didn't think I had a chance in this tournament, even in the semi-final, I just didn't feel like I was playing well, I was just playing soft and safe on the table", added Jimmy Butler.

"So I really thought Timothy is going to kill me in the final."

Certainly **Timothy Wang** was the favourite but he made mistakes against a more consistent adversary.

"I'm really surprised that I actually played my best match of the tournament in the final tonight; that was very unexpected", continued Jimmy Butler. "Timothy looked better than me the whole tournament but once the match started, I was able to deal with all of his shots and I got into a good rhythm; I played very consistently and mistake free, which is one thing I've always been striving to do."

ZHANG MO RETAINS TITLE

Gold for experience and in the counterpart Women's Singles event, it to some extent the same scenario; Canada's 26 year old **Zhang Mo** retained her title.

The no.2 seed, she beat **Lily Zhang** of the United States, the top seed, in the final (11-3, 11-1, 8-11, 11-8, 11-7), having at the semi-final overcome **Amy Wang**, the no.8 seed and also from the United States (11-3, 11-3, 8-11, 11-13, 11-9, 11-9).

In the counterpart semi-final, **Lily Zhang** had overcome colleague Judy Hugh, the

no.5 seed (9-11, 11-7, 11-3, 11-3, 11-8). Third place went to **Amy Wang**, she beat Judy Hugh in three straight games (13-11, 11-8, 11-9).

WELL PREPARED

"I think I prepared very well for the final against Lily; she's higher ranked than me, so I was always ready to fight during the match", said Zhang Mo. "I am elated

to qualify for the Women's World Cup later this year; last year I lost in the qualifications, so I hope to advance further this year!"

WORLD CUP TOURNAMENTS

Zhang Mo now qualifies for the Women's World Cup to be staged in Sendai, Japan from Friday 30th October to Sunday 1st November; whilst **Jimmy Butler** now has a passport to the Liebherr Men's World Cup to be held in Halmstad Sweden from Friday 16th to Sunday 18th October.



WORLD RANKING LIST - MEN



Ma Long (CHN) • No. 1



Xu Xin (CHN) • No. 2



Fan Zhendong (CHN) • No. 3

Top 3

Player was active in the previous month

Player had no activity in the previous month

No activity within the last 4 months

The first list where their Starting Points have become final, having attained 5 Significant Wins

Indicates the player is not eligible to represent the Association in World Title events

Indicates the player is not eligible to represent the Association in World Title, Continental Title and International Team events.

RANKING	PREVIOUS	NAME	ASSOC	RANKING PTS.
1	1	MA Long	CHN	3143
2	2	XU Xin	CHN	3000
3	4	FAN Zhendong	CHN	2971
4	3	ZHANG Jike	CHN	2933
5	5	MIZUTANI Jun	JPN	2793
6	6	OVTCHAROV Dimitrij	GER	2790
7	7	BOLL Timo	GER	2733
8	9	SAMSONOV Vladimir	BLR	2675
9	8	FANG Bo	CHN	2664
10	10	FREITAS Marcos	POR	2658
11	14	YAN An	CHN	2589
12	11	NIWA Koki	JPN	2552
13	12	TANG Peng	HKG	2549
14	13	CHUANG Chih-Yuan	TPE	2548
15	16	JOO Saehyuk	KOR	2502
16	15	GAO Ning	SIN	2462
17	17	ZHOU Yu	CHN	2436
18	18	WONG Chun Ting	HKG	2435
19	22	APOLONIA Tiago	POR	2432
20	30	YOSHIMURA Maharu	JPN	2428
21	19	JUNG Youngsik	KOR	2416
22	20	GIONIS Panagiotis	GRE	2395
23	23	GARDOS Robert	AUT	2372
24	24	LEE Sangsu	KOR	2343
25	21	BAUM Patrick	GER	2342
26	25	STEGER Bastian	GER	2318
27	27	MURAMATSU Yuto	JPN	2316
28	35	MORIZONO Masataka	JPN	2304
29	31	MONTEIRO Joao	POR	2299
30	28	FRANZISKA Patrick	GER	2291
31	41	LI Ping ^	QAT	2288
32	35	FILUS Ruwen	GER	2285
33	29	KIM Minseok	KOR	2284
34	33	GACINA Andrej	CRO	2277
35	26	MATSUDAIRA Kenta	JPN	2274
36	43	GAUZY Simon	FRA	2272
37	34	LIANG Jingkun	CHN	2271
38	50	FEGERL Stefan	AUT	2270
39	54	JIANG Tianyi	HKG	2263
40	32	ACHANTA Sharath Kamal	IND	2260
41	55	DRINKHALL Paul	ENG	2257
42	42	YOSHIDA Kaii	JPN	2249
43	61	KOU Lei	UKR	2240
44	37	CHEN Chien-An	TPE	2238
45	51	PITCHFORD Liam	ENG	2234
46	38	MENGEL Steffen	GER	2233
47	40	ASSAR Omar	EGY	2232
48		SHANG Kun	CHN	2222
49	46	MATTENET Adrien	FRA	2216
50	39	KIM Donghyun	KOR	2213

RANKING	PREVIOUS	NAME	ASSOC	RANKING PTS.
51	47	SHIBAEV Alexander	RUS	2209
52	44	CHO Eonrae	KOR	2206
53	48	SHIONO Masato	JPN	2201
54	53	CRISAN Adrian	ROU	2200
55	49	TSUBOI Gustavo	BRA	2196
56	60	CHEN Weixing	AUT	2190
57	66	HABESOHN Daniel	AUT	2188
58	62	GORAK Daniel	POL	2186
58	74	WANG Eugene ^	CAN	2186
60	69	TOKIC Bojan	SLO	2183
60	45	ARUNA Quadri	NGR	2183
62	58	OSHIMA Yuya	JPN	2180
62	65	VLASOV Grigory	RUS	2180
64	70	TAN Ruiwu	CRO	2178
65	56	SKACHKOV Kirill	RUS	2175
65	64	PATTANTYUS Adam	HUN	2175
67	77	GERELL Par	SWE	2174
67	52	KARLSSON Kristian	SWE	2174
69	83	HO Kwan Kit	HKG	2172
70	59	YOSHIDA Masaki	JPN	2167
71	79	LEBESSON Emmanuel	FRA	2164
72	67	WANG Zengyi	POL	2161
73	72	BOBOCICA Mihai	ITA	2156
74	71	LIVENTSOV Alexey	RUS	2152
75	73	WANG Yang ^	SVK	2144
76	64	CALDERANO Hugo	BRA	2132
77	84	PROKOPCOV Dmitrij	CZE	2114
78	81	PERSSON Jon	SWE	2113
79	80	JANG Woojin	KOR	2109
80	75	LI Hu ^	SIN	2108
81	96	GERALDO Joao	POR	2107
82	67	KISHIKAWA Seiya	JPN	2100
83	92	KREANGA Kalinikos	GRE	2098
84	86	SMIRNOV Alexey	RUS	2096
85	87	HE Zhiwen	ESP	2092
86	88	LUNDQVIST Jens	SWE	2091
87	102	MATSUDAIRA Kenji	JPN	2087
88	82	TAKAKIWA Taku	JPN	2084
89	90	DYJAS Jakub	POL	2076
90	93	WALTHER Ricardo	GER	2074
90	89	SEO Hyundeok	KOR	2074
92	78	HUANG Sheng-Sheng	TPE	2071
93	100	LI Ahmet ^	TUR	2067
94	94	CHAN Kazuhiro	JPN	2065
95	95	KONECNY Tomas	CZE	2064
96	76	CHIANG Hung-Chieh	TPE	2063
97	85	MACHI Asuka	JPN	2058
98	107	SAMBE Kohei	JPN	2050
99	99	ELOI Damien	FRA	2048
100	104	STOYANOV Niagol	ITA	2047

See all



WORLD RANKING LIST - WOMEN



Ding Ning (CHN) • No. 1



Liu Shiwen (CHN) • No. 2



Li Xiaoxia (CHN) • No. 3

Top 3

Player was active in the previous month

Player had no activity in the previous month

No activity within the last 4 months

The first list where their Starting Points have become final, having attained 5 Significant Wins

Indicates the player is not eligible to represent the Association in World Title events

Indicates the player is not eligible to represent the Association in World Title, Continental Title and International Team events.

RANKING	PREVIOUS	NAME	ASSOC	RANKING PTS.
1	1	DING Ning	CHN	3253
2	2	LIU Shiwen	CHN	3231
3	3	LI Xiaoxia	CHN	3148
4	6	ZHU Yuling	CHN	3092
5	5	ISHIKAWA Kasumi	JPN	3025
6	4	FENG Tianwei	SIN	2984
7	11	CHEN Meng	CHN	2935
8	7	WU Yang	CHN	2933
9	8	FUKUHARA Ai	JPN	2910
10	9	ITO Mima	JPN	2855
11	13	SEO Hyowon	KOR	2788
12	10	HAN Ying ^	GER	2787
13	14	DOO Hoi Kem	HKG	2772
14	12	YANG Haeun	KOR	2732
15	17	LIU Jia	AUT	2709
16	35	LI Jiao	NED	2708
17	18	SAMARA Elizabeta	ROU	2701
18	19	HIRANO Miu	JPN	2682
19	25	JEON Jihee ^	KOR	2678
20	20	POTA Georgina	HUN	2666
21	21	LI Jie	NED	2664
22	29	SHAN Xiaona ^	GER	2662
22	16	HIRANO Sayaka	JPN	2662
24	31	JIANG Huajun	HKG	2661
25	15	YU Mengyu	SIN	2659
26	23	ISHIGAKI Yuka	JPN	2656
27	24	SOLJA Petrissa	GER	2655
28	30	HU Melek	TUR	2649
29	28	LIU Fei	CHN	2648
30	27	RI Myong Sun	PRK	2633
31	25	MORIZONO Misaki	JPN	2625
32	41	TIE Yana	HKG	2624
33	39	SATO Hitomi	JPN	2617
34	33	LEE Ho Ching	HKG	2602
35	43	WAKAMIYA Misako	JPN	2599
36	22	YU Fu ^	POR	2595
37	42	LI Qian	POL	2583
38	32	CHENG I-Ching	TPE	2579
39	34	SHEN Yanfei	ESP	2574
40	37	IVANCAN Irene	GER	2567
41	38	MU Zi	CHN	2564
42	36	CHEN Szu-Yu	TPE	2542
43	47	YANG Xiaoxin ^^	MON	2518
44	44	CHOI Hyojoo ^	KOR	2517
45	40	WU Jiaduo	GER	2511
46	45	SILBEREISEN Kristin	GER	2504
47	46	BILENKO Tetyana	UKR	2493
48		MOON Hyunjung	KOR	2478
49	48	GU Ruochen	CHN	2474
50	54	PESOTSKA Margaryta	UKR	2463

RANKING	PREVIOUS	NAME	ASSOC	RANKING PTS.
51	50	WINTER Sabine	GER	2459
52	52	LI Xue ^	FRA	2449
53	60	VACENOVSKA Iveta	CZE	2447
54	53	CHE Xiaoxi	CHN	2442
55	56	RI Mi Gyong	PRK	2435
56	49	LIN Ye ^	SIN	2433
57	51	HAYATA Hina	JPN	2417
57	57	POLCANOVA Sofia ^	AUT	2417
59	61	NI Xialian	LUX	2409
60	64	EKHOLM Matilda	SWE	2404
61	62	SZOCS Bernadette	ROU	2392
62	89	ZENG Jian ^^	SIN	2385
63	58	KATO Miyu	JPN	2378
64	59	PARK Youngsook	KOR	2372
65	65	ZHOU Yihan ^	SIN	2366
66	67	ZHANG Qiang	CHN	2365
67	69	KIM Jong	PRK	2364
68	66	PARTYKA Natalia	POL	2362
69	75	SUN Yingsha	CHN	2359
69	68	HAMAMOTO Yui	JPN	2359
71	55	LEE I-Chen	TPE	2356
72	72	MORI Sakura	JPN	2350
73	70	MIKHAILOVA Polina	RUS	2349
74	63	MAEDA Miyu	JPN	2348
75	74	GRUNDISCH Carole	FRA	2345
76	73	DOLGIKH Maria	RUS	2341
77	71	HUANG Yi-Hua	TPE	2340
78	76	GRZYBOWSKA Katarzyna	POL	2323
79	80	PASKAUSKIENE Ruta	LTU	2318
80	99	STRBIKOVA Renata	CZE	2317
81	77	SOLJA Amelie ^^	AUT	2314
82	85	NOSKOVA Yana	RUS	2308
83	82	PARK Seonghye	KOR	2306
84	83	SHAO Jieni ^^	POR	2304
85	84	MATSUZAWA Marina	JPN	2303
85	91	BALAZOVA Barbora	SVK	2303
87	86	MADARASZ Dora	HUN	2302
88	87	YOO Eunhong	KOR	2301
89		YOON Sunae	KOR	2300
90	78	MITTELHAM Nina	GER	2297
91	92	LEE Eunhee	KOR	2296
92	86	TIKHOMIROVA Anna	RUS	2290
93	90	EERLAND Britt	NED	2289
94	81	ZHANG Lily	USA	2281
95	98	TIAN Yuan	CRO	2277
96	93	GAPONOVA Ganna	UKR	2272
97	97	XIAN Yifang	FRA	2271
98	95	POSTOACA Camelia	ROU	2268
99	94	ABE Megumi	JPN	2266
99	96	MATSUDAIRA Shiho	JPN	2266

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JIANG JIALIANG