

**Liebherr 2018 World Team Table Tennis Championships
29 April - 6 May 2018, Halmstad, Sweden**

Flash Quotes

Day 8 - 6 May 2018

Division One

Team China defeated Germany 3-0 in the Men's Team Final:

Xu Xin beats Franziska Patrick 3-0 (3-0)

XU Xin (CHN):

"I am super happy and I think it was a fantastic match. I was a little bit under pressure. I also put me, people and the audience on nerves. Maybe my left hand is not the most powerful hand, the most capable hand in the world, but I think my left hand is the most creative hand in the world. When I was down, I told to myself not to give up, I tried to be more active and encouraging myself. I also I believed in my teammates. Even if I lost, my teammates would have won the match."

Fan Zhendong beats Filus Ruwen 3-0 (2-0)

FAN Zhendong (CHN):

"I haven't played against him since a long time so I was fully prepared for the difficulties. Even when I was leading, I told to myself not to lose the concentration and to stay focus. To play against Filus needs patience. I waited to see the right time to take initiative. If I was too aggressive I made some mistakes so I had to keep patient."

Ma Long beats Boll Timo 3-0 (1-0)

MA Long (CHN):

"I regard Timo as strong as I am. I put him in the very high level. I watched him play yesterday and he was in a good shape. I didn't feel too much pressure today. I took initiatives and became more active. I'm glad that I won. I think it was both a mental and technically match, but this not only one side. When I played against Timo I thought I was playing against myself. When I was 4-7 down in the second game, I tried to take more initiatives and then I won."

Day 7 - 5 May 2018

Team China defeated Japan 3-1 in the Women's Team Final:

Liu Shiwen beats Hirano Miu 3-0 (3-1)

LIU Shiwen (CHN):

"It was a pity that I didn't win the first match because I was leading but then I lost the opportunity. For the fourth match I thought I must win. I adjusted myself and finally I won. I am very happy that we are the champions now. Again, for me it was a pity to lose the first match, but the most important thing was to win with the team. I thank all the fans that supported us!"

Zhu Yuling beats Ishikawa Kasumi 3-0 (2-1)

ZHU Yuling (CHN):

"I played against her recently and I also won 3-0. So I had confidence to play against her. I am happy that I won. I hope we can win and that everyone enjoy the match."

Ding Ning beats Hirano Miu 3-0 (1-1)

DING Ning (CHN):

"When I was 5-9 down in the third game, I didn't give up and tried to see the opportunities. I fight a lot and then I won. In a final match it is not only a technic competition but also a mental one."

Ito Mima beats Liu Shiwen 3-2 (0-1)

ITO Mima (JAP):

"After my time-out, I was just thinking what I can do. I tried to concentrate on the things I do well. Then it changed. I always try to attack again and again because it is my own way of playing."

Team Germany defeated Republic of Korea 3-2 in the Men's Team Semifinals:

Franziska Patrick beats Jeoung Youngsik 3-1 (3-2)

FRANZISKA Patrick (GER):

“It was an unbelievable tight match. We had to fight for every point. The Koreans also played fantastic and they would also have deserved it for sure. At the end it is some small details that decided the game. I’m so happy that we won. I don’t think at the final yet it was a tough match here. It is amazing to play a World Championships final. It was a big goal before the tournament. I will try to recover fast and of course we want to attack China.”

“Unbelievable, it was such a tight match, the Korean team played really well; to reach the final was our big goal.”

Boll Timo beats Lee Sangsu 3-2 (2-2)

BOLL Timo (GER):

“At the moment, I feel really exhausted. It took so much energy, so much to think about tactics and moving well. Lee Sangsu also played great today. It was really a close match and there shouldn’t be a loser today. This game was totally open today. We both played at our limits and we both could win. It was just a little bit more luck or I don’t know what. We are happy we could come back at 2-2. I hope we will win but it will be difficult. We will try our best.”

“A lot of energy was needed in this match, I was moving well. The match was totally open; Lee Sangsu played really well; either of us could have won. It was just a bit of luck either way or whatever.”

Jang Woojin beats Ovtcharov Dimitrij 3-0 (1-2)

JANG Woojin (KOR):

“I tried to control myself because this was the third match and there was lot of pressure. I focused on myself and it was the key of this win. After the great point I won in the second game (5-5) I had to stay focused on myself.”

Boll Timo beats Jeoung Youngsik 3-1 (1-1)

BOLL Timo (GER):

“He played so far a great tournament. I knew that. But I also was in a good shape. I had a lot of self-confidence. I took the ball earlier than him and that was my key strategy. I hope Dima will now make the difference. It is a very important point. I think it will be a key point.”

“He’s had a good tournament, he is in good shape but I am also in good shape. Throughout the match I tried to attack quickly.”

Lee Sangsu beats Franziska Patrick 3-1 (0-1)

LEE Sangsu (KOR):

“Not all time-out are important, it depends when you take it. I was leading in the second game but then my coach took the time-out telling me to be more offensive. And that have been important for the win. My forehand topspin is my best strength. I needed to use it more to win this game.”

Team China defeated Sweden 3-0 in the Men’s Team Semifinals:

Xu Xin beats Persson Jon 3-0 (3-0)

XU Xin (CHN) :

“I played against him in the previous World Team Championships. So I prepared a lot this match, especially for my serve and the rallies. This is how I won the game. Both Germany and Republic of Korea are the strongest opponents for us. It doesn’t matter who we will meet in the final, we want to win!”

“I have played against Jon before so in both serve and receive I knew what to expect so I was quite confident.”

Fan Zhendong beats Karlsson Kristian 3-1 (2-0)

FAN Zhendong (CHN):

“I think the first game was important for both of us. Winning the first game made me play more smoothly and I could control the game. I think every player has their own strengths and specialties in their own style. I am satisfied and glad that I played with high quality in the long rallies.”

“The first game was important for both of us, winning the first game helped me play smoothly. Every player has their own strengths, their own individual style. I think I played well in the rallies.”

Ma Long beats Karlsson Mattias 3-0 (1-0)

MA Long (CHN):

“I was fully prepared for this match. Mattias played very well in the previous matches so I tried to be more active especially after my 3-2 win of yesterday (against Gardos). I want to thanks the Chinese spectators for supporting us and also thank you for the Swedish audience supporting their team. I think it will be a fantastic match.”

“I was fully prepared for this match. Yesterday I had a three-two match. Mattias played very well. Sweden has the crowd behind them but also there are Chinese supporters here. Thank you for supporting us and also thanks to the Swedish supporters for supporting their team; it makes a fantastic match.”

Division Two

Team Iran after gaining promotion

NOROOZI Afshin (IRI):

“I started playing in the World Championship in 2004 in Doha, Qatar. We have made several attempts to make it to the Championship Division but we never did. I am so happy that our dream has become a reality against the stiff opposition we faced in Halmstad. I think that it is a reward for the hard work the team has put in coupled with the technical support from coach Jamil Lotfellahnasabi.”

“Before the competition, we prepared very well and I am so happy that our efforts were not wasted in Sweden. We were united as a team and we were focused in all our matches. This is the biggest thing to have happened to Iran in table tennis and we will cherish it for a long time.”

Afshin Noroozi trailed Yevhen Pryshchepa by two games to nil, before recovering to win the next three (8-11, 5-11, 12-10, 11-4, 11-8).

“I knew the importance of the third game because it was crucial for both teams and the match would surely decide the eventual winner. I was leading in the first game 5-1 but I lost it because I was under a lot of stress. I think losing the first game really impacted on my losing the second. I encouraged myself that I must try and win the match for the team. The advice from the coach really helped me to win the match. I am so happy

being part of this team because I am not sure if I can still continue to be part of the team.”

Day 6 - 4 May 2018

Massimo Costantini (India Coach) views on coaching

COSTANTINI Massimo:

The feeling was that when I left in 2010, I felt a sort of unfinished business. I was doing well when we won medals at the Commonwealth Games and Sharath Achanta had won on the World Tour. I felt a sort of not completing my job.

I went to the United States for six years where I learned a lot. I came back in 2016 with double motivation and good support from a government.

Table tennis is a skill game and I cannot add skills when the player is not able to perform skills. So I had to follow the players who have some skills to improve the skills already there. I made the skills better and better. I reversed the way many coaches work by fixing the problems of the players. I forgot the problems and focused on the strength of the players and make it better.

If I have a skill that performs at 80 percent, I bring it to 100 percent. The players were very comfortable and happy because when you work on the weaknesses, the players are unhappy but when you work on skills they are very happy and you get the most from them. This was the basic work I did.

At the Commonwealth Games, I was extremely happy for them because I know the work and how much dedication that was behind those medals. Winning seven to eight medals in an event that was a dream.

India has the potential to win medals in each event not only in one event, the men's category, as in the past. Now we have a chance to get medals in teams, women's doubles and all the events in which we never perform; it was a big achievement for India this time.

Initially things were not going well for Manika Batra because she has a special game. She uses pimples and this makes her game complicated for most opponents. To find the proper mechanism to perform her skills and combine in the game according to her opponent's skills took time. In 2017, she had ups and down; from this year, she started performing well in various tournaments. She reached the peak at the Commonwealth Games.

When you improve individuals, you improve the general level because the top players they are role models for upcoming players. I know a lot of players want to emulate

Manika Batra and this kind of feeling will help the team to perform better as it will rub off on other players. When you set a target, you go up and exceed the set target..

My greatest moments were when Manika Batra won the Women's Singles and it was indeed an amazing moment. Also when the Women's Team won the final against Singapore particularly the doubles victory was a great moment for me."

Division One

Team China defeated Hong Kong China 3-1 in the Women's Team Semifinals:

Ding Ning beats Doo Hoi Kem 3-1 (3-1)

DING Ning (CHN):

"Actually I wasn't satisfied with my performance in the first match. I didn't play very well. But I knew I had to play in the fourth match so I tried my best to adjust myself and give my best to win the match. Indeed my foot was a little bit injured; it is not an excuse for having lost the first match. Now, for the final, we will analyze and prepare fully. I will learn about my defeat from today and we will discuss about it."

Liu Shiwen beats Lee Ho Ching 3-1 (2-1)

LIU Shiwen (CHN):

"She played very fast in the third set, especially in the first three rallies. Her shots became faster than I expected and I wasn't mentally prepared for that. But then in the fourth set I was prepared for that. We cannot breathe a little easier but I believe my teammates can win the match. I have confidence in them but it will be fine only when we will win the third match."

Zhu Yuling beats Doo Hoi Kem 3-2 (1-1)

ZHU Yuling (CHN):

"Doo played very well, especially her backhand was very strong. I played against her several times. I feel lucky that I won this game. I didn't play in the last two games, so I tried my best to adjust myself to this court and I think I will play better and better."

Soo W. Y. Minnie beats Ding Ning 3-0 (0-1)

SOO W. Y. Minnie (HKG):

"I think she really didn't have confidence to receive my serve and I manage to see this opportunity. I didn't think they will really feel more pressure now but I hope they will."

"I'm very pleased of course with the win; before the match started I thought to myself that I must not lose by a big margin, get as close as I possibly could, hope the gap was not too wide. I'm really surprised with my performance; my performance was higher than usual, hers was lower than usual. I tried my best not to think that she is the Olympic and World champion, I tried to treat her as player and give me best."

DING Ning (CHN):

"I didn't play in the last two matches in this tournament and we don't play against Hong Kong that often. In the match I was not really focused. Also my preparation was not too good; at the moment I don't feel one hundred per cent fit mentally or physically."

Team Japan defeated Korea 3-0 in the Women's Team Semifinals:

Hirano Miu beats Yang Haeun 3-1 (3-0)

HIRANO Miu (JAP):

"We played against combined teams. They were strong but we really wanted to give our best. We didn't know who was playing because they had more athletes that were able to compete. We actually practiced and were prepared for any case. We came here to win the gold medal and that is what we are going to do."

Ishikawa Kasumi beats Kim Song I 3-2 (2-0)

ISHIKAWA Kasumi (JAP):

"It was really a tough match for me. I didn't know what the outcome would be but I gave my best. This is the semifinal so there is more pressure."

"It was a pressure match; Kim Song I is a really great player. It was hard to find a rhythm to the match. In the last game she had some luck but that's sport but those points never cost me the match so I still had a chance to win. I just focused on playing

one point at a time. Most certainly it was a difficult match, we played a team we never expected to play.”

Ito Mima beats Jeon Jihee 3-0 (1-0)

ITO Mima (JAP):

“When I was 0-4 down in the second set, I changed my serve. This made a big difference. I really wanted to try playing correct with very few mistakes. This also made a difference.”

Team Germany defeated Brazil 3-1 in the Men’s Team Quarterfinals:

ROSSKOPF Jorg (GER coach):

“Timo suffered from the back injury. It worsened from yesterday until today and I have to see how it would look tomorrow. We cannot say anything now. In addition, OVTCHAROV is still in the process of recovery. Each time here, he played at the position no. three. I was thinking of putting him on position no. two, but it was not possible. The reality is that we have the old team and that we have to cope with that in best possible way.”

OVTCHAROV Dimitrij (GER):

“When I heard that Timo could not play I was only thinking that we had to fight harder. I gave my best to prevent Tsuboi to put me behind. We are in difficult position, but good point is that our adversaries do not know how to prepare the tactics. No one knows with what team we will play.”

FILUS Ruwen (GER):

“Calderano is very dangerous player and we were ready for him. His style is familiar to us since he was playing in Bundesliga. For me, it was important to attack and to play very fast game. Even when he was closing game on me, I did not loosen the grip, I played in full power. He is kind of player who already beat Timo Boll, so now i am very happy and tired.”

Team Sweden defeated England 3-0 in the Men's Team Quarterfinals:

Persson Jon beats Walker Samuel 3-0 (3-0)

PERSSON Jon (SWE):

"I feel unbelievable great. To play in this hall with this crowd it's fantastic. It's the best feeling ever. This crowd is also one of the reasons why we are now in the semifinal. It's just fantastic I cannot tell anymore. I'm speechless now. We had a 2-0 lead and I knew that if I lose we would have other matches to win the game. The first set I was really really nervous. But at the end it was great! Before the game we talk about having fun and enjoy the crowd. A quarterfinal against England it is one of the best thing you can have in your career. Tomorrow we will do our best against China. But first we will have a nice evening to celebrate and to prepare for tomorrow."

"I was nervous at the beginning of the match, I knew the importance, win and we were in the semis. Sam has a reputation for being good in the big matches but equally I like to play the big matches. Here the crowd the support has been tremendous, great atmosphere."

Karlsson Mattias beats Pitchford Liam 3-2 (2-0)

KARLSSON Mattias (SWE):

"It was a really tough game. Liam is a really good player and he is a good friend. It was a tough game both in the court and mentally. I tried to be aggressive on the first attacks and don't gave him too much time. He has a fantastic backhand. I hope we will win but we have to be 100% focus because it will be tough."

"I was aware of the importance of the match; England needed this match. Kristian had played great to beat Paul. Liam and I practice here in Halmstad, the English coach Mattias Sjöberg was my coach until I was 14 or 15 years old; it was a special match for me in more ways than one. The match was decided by very small margins. I was serving at 9-9 in the fifth game, I won a long point; then I decided to serve to the middle and follow with a strong attack; I just went for it, believed in myself and it came good."

Karlsson Kristian beats Drinkhall Paul 3-0 (1-0)

KARLSSON Kristian (SWE):

"I mean, matches like this, it is point at a time. I think I manage to keep my focus. I turned the second set and obviously it was very important for the match. If you let Paul

playing with his strong forehand it's pretty much over for you. I tried to keep him in the backhand corner and I managed to do it very well."

"I was down 2-8 in the second game and came back; that was crucial. I feel I made good decisions during the match; we are of a similar style, we both like to play forehands. Against Paul, the first attack is vital, today I was aggressive, let him attack first and he is very good."

Team Republic of Korea defeated Japan 3-1 in the Men's Team Quarterfinals:

Jeoung Youngsik beats Harimoto Tomokazu (3-2) & Mizutani Jun (3-0)

JEOUNG Youngsik (KOR):

"Tomokazu Harimoto is a rising star, you have to be really focused when you play against him; I won 11-9 in the fifth game, there was very little difference between us. I tried to stay calm and focused; perhaps at the very end of the match I was just slightly mentally stronger. Playing Jun Mizutani I was aware that if I won we would be in the semi-final; my backhand is my strength, I focused on playing strongly with my backhand towards his backhand."

TAEKSOO Kim (KOR coach):

"We have a really strong team spirit, we are together, individually they have very good players but we are very much together. Before the match I reminded them about the defeat in London and that here was a chance to avenge that defeat. Everyone was motivated."

Team China defeated Austria 3-0 in the Men's Team Quarterfinals:

Ma Long beats Gardos Robert 3-2 (1-0)

MA Long (CHN):

“It’s normal to lose a game; it’s nothing unusual; maybe in previous World Team Championships I’ve been lucky to win three-nil. Robert Gardos is familiar with Chinese players, we know him very well, he plays at very fast past, he’s a difficult opponent.”

Day 5 - 3 May 2018

UNIFIED KOREA TEAM

WEIKERT Thomas:

“When I informed the Board of Directors about this development, the Unified Team received a standing ovation from the delegates who showed their sign of support for this historic move.”

JU Jong Chol:

“This is the result of the strong support provided by the ITTF and IOC. We will do our best to get more successful results internationally in a joint effort between North and South Korea.”

RYU Seungmin:

“This is a big historical decision for both our countries. This is table tennis history so we are very happy. I would like to thank the ITTF for their strong support. This is an important statement to promote peace between our countries through table tennis.”

AN Jaehyun:

“I’m very emotional, it is the first time since Chiba, I feel I am in Chiba. The agreement to unify underlines the power of table tennis.”

Division One

Team Hong Kong China defeated Romania 3-0 in the Women’s Team Quarterfinals:

Soo Wai Yam Minnie beats Daniela Monteiro-Dodean 3-0 (3-0)

SOO W. Y. Minnie (HKG):

“I was confident but in the first game I was somewhat nervous; I wasn’t really warmed up. She had a good lead in the first game but I managed to come back and win. After that I found a rhythm to my play and I became more confident.”

Doo Hoi Kem beats Szocs Bernadette 3-2 (2-0)

DOO Hoi Kem (HKG):

“In the first game Bernadette played really well, I really was not prepared for the way she played; in the second and third games I played more positively, I tried to play wide to move her out of position. She is strong from the backhand but I thought her forehand was very good today; the biggest problem was receiving her service. It was difficult to prevent her playing a strong first attack. In the fifth game it was a case of just play point by point and staying focused.”

Lee Ho Ching beats Samara Elizabeta 3-1 (1-0)

LEE Ho Ching (HKG):

“It was so noisy in the hall because we played at the same time as the Swedish men. I found it really difficult to focus. Playing first you have an important role to play, you are in a position where you can give your team a really good start. I felt under pressure; the most difficult thing was dealing with the pressure. I tried to keep my concentration but I think I should have been more aggressive from my forehand.”

Team Japan defeated Ukraine 3-0 in the Women's Team Quarterfinals:

Hirano Miu beats Gaponova Ganna 3-0 (3-0)

HIRANO Miu (JAP):

“We were very surprised to hear that both Korea will fight together. We will try our best against them. We are trying really hard to get the gold medal.”

Ishikawa Kasumi beats Bilenko Tetyana 3-0 (2-0)

ISHIKAWA Kasumi (JAP):

“Today I really wanted to attack right from the beginning and it worked well.”

Ito Mima beats Pesotska Margaryta 3-2 (1-0)

ITO Mima (JAP):

“I didn’t really think about the match points I missed. I was just thinking point after point. We practiced well against defensive players so we are looking to play well. Now I will encourage my teammates.”

“Either of us could have won, it wasn’t a question of tactics, it was a question of staying strong mentally; it was vital to make sure that at all times I remained focused. Playing first is an important position in the team but I don’t feel any greater pressure than playing in any other position in the team.”

Team China defeated Austria 3-0 in the Women’s Team Quarterfinals:

Wang Manyu beats Mischek Karoline 3-0 (3-0)

WANG Manyu (CHN):

“My opponent was not comfortable with my serve. So when I had to serve at 9-9 in the second set I knew it was very important. It was the key of this set. We are prepared for the difficulties in the Semifinals.”

“I knew at 9-all in the second game that I had the advantage with my service. I knew she was not comfortable against my service, so I came through.”

Chen Meng beats Solja Amelie 3-0 (2-0)

CHEN Meng (CHN):

“Indeed she plays a very unusual way of play. But I have seen this kind of play many years ago in China and I also played against her many years ago. I think she plays kind of traditional long rubber way. I was fully prepared for this match.”

“Amelie plays in a quite unusual way; I have seen similar styles on many occasions in China. She uses the long pimped rubber but I was prepared, I knew what to expect.”

Liu Shiwen beats Polcanova Sofia 3-0 (1-0)

LIU Shiwen (CHN):

“This is the first match in the Quarterfinals. I prepared it very well. It is the first time we played each other and I think she might be not that comfortable with my speed so that is how I won.”

Team Austria defeated Portugal 3-2 in the Men's Team Round of 16:

Gardos Robert beats Freitas Marcos 3-2 (3-2)

GARDOS Robert (AUT):

“Marcos and myself have so many league matches against each other, the last twice we have played I have won. In the first two games it was perfect; at the end of the second game we both took a toilet break and things changed. We both knew that if we got the tactics wrong then we'd be killed. At 9-all in the fourth game I had the service, I just said to myself focus on the point, nothing else.”

Fegerl Stefan beats Apolonia Tiago 3-0 (2-2)

FEGERL Stefan (AUT):

“I feel tired but happy. Now it's 2-2, there is the final game. We fight back and now I think that everything is open. I hope we can success to the quarter. The first set Apolonia was better than me and he was leading but I fight and I won it. It gave me self-confidence and after this first set I played very good and clever. I am very happy. At 2-2 you cannot really speak about tactic. It's more about the head and nerves; who can put the ball one more time on the table.”

Freitas Marcos beats Fegerl Stefan 3-1 (0-2)

FREITAS Marcos (POR):

“I am not surprised that we lead 2-0. Of course, it is a good lead because Austria is a very good team. We lost against them more than one time in the past. I think it is a 50/50 match. Now we have a good lead but it is not over. They still can turn the game at any moment. I hope now Joao Monteiro can win and close the game. The player who will be better tactically and mentally will win.”

Apolonia Tiago beats Gardos Robert 3-1 (0-1)

APOLONIA Tiago (POR):

"I think the first set was very important. I managed to win a very close set. It gave me confidence during all the game. I think that was the key point. It is a very tough tournament. We knew it from the beginning that it would be a difficult group stage with very strong teams. I think everything normal until now and I'm happy that I managed to give our team the lead again a very strong Austria team. We had some problems against them in the past. Now I hope Marcos will give us a 2-0 lead."

Team Sweden defeated Chinese Taipei 3-0 in the Men's Team Round of 16:

CARLSSON Ulf (SWE): (Swedish Coach)

"We made a good start, we went two-nil ahead but eventually we needed a fifth match to secure the win; there are so many good teams here, every match is tough. For sure I'm happy with our win today."

Karlsson Mattias beats Chen Chien-An 3-1 (3-2)

KARLSSON Mattias (SWE):

"I have no words right now. I am really happy. I had a great chance to cloth the match at 2-0 9-5 and I'm happy I manage to comeback after that. I tried to forget the set I lost and keep going. I played really fantastic. England plays really well. They have a strong team. They show it in the last World Team Championships in Malaysia. We will have to play at our best if we want to have a chance to beat them."

"I was nervous during the whole match against Chen Chien-An! In the third game he played outstandingly well: I have no complaints he played some great points. Against Chuang Chih-Yuan in the first match, I won a close first game which helped; he's very good in the rallies, he's a tough opponent."

Chuang Chih-Yuan beats Karlsson Kristian 3-1 (2-2)

CHUANG Chih-Yuan (TPE):

"I tried to focus on the match, to be focus on each point, to fight and then I succeeded. I often give my teammates some advices, share experience and tactics."

KARLSSON Kristian (SWE):

“Against Chen Chien-An I tried to stay focused throughout the whole match; play my game and follow the tactics I’ve employed against him in the past. We played many times against each other in the French League. He’s left handed like me and usually I feel confident against left handers; I felt today in backhand to backhand rallies I was stronger. Playing Chuang Chih-Yuan he raised his game, he played very well; the second game I lost closely but I don’t think that had more effect on the outcome than any other game. He played well.”

Lin Yun-Ju beats Persson Jon 3-2 (2-1)

LIN Yun-Ju (TPE):

“I didn’t feel something special regarding the crowd pushing my opponent. I tried my best to play points one by one, step by step. I think I played a little bit faster than before and I played better than I expected.”

Karlsson Kristian beats Chen Chien-An 3-0 (2-0)

KARLSSON Kristian (SWE):

“I played good so far. I lost a couple of tough matches against very good opponents, but I was close in all of these matches I lost. So I feel in a good shape and it was nice to prove it today. In the first set I played very well. In the second one, he was up but I played really good in the end of the set. In the third set I think I was a little bit lucky with a couple of net balls with me, unfortunately for him.”

Karlsson Mattias beats Chuang Chih-Yuan 3-0 (1-0)

KARLSSON Mattias (SWE):

“It was a great match from my side and I’m really happy that I played so good backhand against backhand because it is important for my game. The first set wasn’t decisive but it was important especially for me because I was a little bit nervous in the beginning. After the first set, I was a little bit calmer.”

Team Japan defeated Hong Kong China 3-0 in the Men’s Team Round of 16:

Mizutani Jun beats Ho Kwan Kit 3-1 (2-0)

MIZUTANI Jun (JAP):

“In the first game I was nervous. After I went two-one ahead I felt much less pressure and I was able to play much more freely.”

Notably Jun Mizutani did not wear spectacles as he had done earlier in the tournament.

“The spectacles I wore aren’t quite right, I need to change the lenses; I’m finding here that the light is so bright it is hurting my eyes.”

Day 4 - 2 May 2018

Division One

Team Austria defeated Germany 3-2 in the Women's Team Round of 16:

Liu Jia beats Winter Sabine 3-2 (3-2)

LIU Jia (AUT):

"We have a very good team, very strong and with a good team spirit. But I have also been strongly connected to the German team. We are all good friends. So for me it was kind of a conflict to play against them but I'm glad that we won."

Solja Petrisa beats Liu Jia 3-0 (1-1)

SOLJA Petrisa (GER) :

"I am very happy with my performance. We know each other very well. We also played in the same club in the past. It is always a close match against her but today I was quite better. I just tried to put the ball on the table and it worked quite well."

Polcanova Sofia beats Winter Sabine 3-2 (1-0)

POLCANOVA Sofia (AUT):

"I think it was a really tough match. For me, it is always hard to play the first match for the team. I knew I had to win. Sabine played really well but overall I'm happy that I could win. Sabine has a really strong forehand so I tried to play more on her backhand and to make spin variations. It worked well in the two first sets but then she got used and changed her tactic. So I had to figure out what I had to do to win."

Team Ukraine defeated Singapore 3-2 in the Women's Team Round of 16:

Bilenko Tetyana beats Yu Mengyu 3-0 (3-2)

BILENKO Tetyana (UKR):

"I made some easy mistakes, I was feeling the pressure, win and we were in the quarter-finals for the first time. I tried to relax and keep defending, my attack is not so good at the moment but Yu Mengyu gave me few opportunities to attack."

Pesotska Margaryta beats Lin Ye 3-1 (2-1)

PESOTSKA Margayta (UKR):

"I knew if I could win we had a chance. I won the first two games but lost the third, I had some problems receiving service but in the opening game I felt comfortable. My backhand is my strength but my forehand was not too bad today. I think my attacking style complements the defenders in the team."

Gaponova Ganna beats Yu Mengyu 3-2 (1-1)

GAPONOVA Ganna (UKR):

"I felt confident after winning yesterday. Everything is possible but today I felt I should win not I might win; the fifth game was very difficult, Yu Mengyu is a high level player but I believed and I made it."

Team Hong Kong China defeated Chinese Taipei 3-1 in the Women's Team Round of 16:

Li Ching about Doo Hoi Kem beating Liu Hsing-Yin (3-0) and Cheng I-Ching (3-0)

LI Ching (Hong Kong Coach):

"It was a hard game, Doo Hoi Kem played very well today, over the past two years since Kuala Lumpur she has grown up. Sometimes, she gets a little nervous; then you have to pick her up and instill belief in her."

Doo Hoi Kem beats Cheng I-Ching 3-0 (3-1)

DOO Hoi Kem (HKG):

"If Minnie had beaten Cheng I-Ching it would have been a bonus; for me it was important to stay totally focused all the time. I expected that they would play Chen Szu-Yu in the second match not Liu Hsing-Yin, so that was a surprise. Cheng I-Ching is

a very good player; I kept thinking of two years ago in Kuala Lumpur. In Kuala Lumpur I thought that if I lost then we would win the next match; in the fourth match, like today I played Cheng I-Ching and I lost. Today I was determined that would not happen again. I think now my technique is better and I'm more confident in the long points."

Cheng I-Ching beats Soo W. Y. Minnie 3-2 (0-1)

CHENG I-Ching (TPE):

"I am very happy to win this game. In the first two sets I was a little bit too conservative but then I played faster and I controlled the game."

Team Sweden defeated Egypt 3-0 in the Men's Team group stage:

Ulf "Tickan" Carlsson (Swedish Coach) after the win over Egypt

CARLSSON Ulf (SWE):

"Today, the first time for Truls Moregard at a World Championships, it's a special occasion; it's a situation that is not easy to handle. At the beginning against Khalid Assar he was nervous but he handled the situation and showed that mentally he is strong. We started the tournament as the third highest rated team in the group, we finished second. We lost just one match, we lost to Germany, we didn't make a good start against them; if you are going to beat a team like Germany you need a good start to put them under pressure. Overall I'm pleased, I think everyone played to a good level but it's now the tournament starts; we must raise our level even higher."

Karlsson Kristian beats Saleh Ahmed 3-0 (3-0)

KARLSSON Kristian (SWE):

"I think we have done a very good job in this group. We didn't manage to threaten Germany as well as we would like to. We lost 0-3 after some close defeats. But overall we are happy to be second after being seeded third. It means a lot that Anton said we are showing the way for them. I don't know what I exactly do but it's a very nice compliment. I will try to keep doing that."

Kallberg Anton beats El-Beiali Mohamed 3-0 (2-0)

KALLBERG Anton (SWE):

“Of course it was nice to play. This is the place you want to play right now. I couldn’t be more happy about the place to play. In our team we have a mix. Truls and I are the youngest. We also have some top players in the world as well. They are showing the way for us and we try to learn as much as we can.”

Moregard Truls beats Assar Khalid 3-2 (1-0)

MOREGARD Truls (SWE):

“I was a little bit nervous in the beginning but I played good. The crowd was amazing so it was nice. I don’t felt pressure, it was just fun.”

“I was nervous at the beginning of the match, my backhand was not good, I concentrated on playing my forehand. I felt under pressure. After losing the second game I tried to relax more and focus on playing just one point at a time. After winning the third game I became more confident.”

Team Chinese Taipei defeated Belarus 3-2 in the Men’s Team group stage:

Liao Cheng-Ting beats Khan Aliaksandr 3-1 (1-2)

LIAO Cheng-Ting (TPE):

“I felt a little nervous before the match but I made sure I was focused and just tried to play point by point not think of the score, winning the close third game made a big difference. He had some problems returning my service and I was able time and again to play a strong first attack.”

Team China defeated DPR Korea 3-0 in the Men’s Team group stage:

MA Long at the end of the game (CHN):

“We need to up status by playing match by match. So whatever happen on court is normal. We will get some rest in the coming day and also watch the games of the men’s next stage today as well to get prepared for the next opponent.”

Xu Xin beats Kang Wi Hun 3-0 (3-0)

XU Xin (CHN):

“Tomorrow we will know who we will be our opponent. We will watch some videos, analyze tactics and then prepare for it. I hope there will be other fantastic rallies in the next games, but I think all the player that have good attitude are respectful.”

Fan Zhendong beats Pak Sin Hyok 3-0 (2-0)

FAN Zhendong (CHN):

“I think I am always in a very good performing status. Yesterday Geraldo tried really hard to defeat me so I think it is really acceptable to lose some points. I am glad I could give my best.”

Ma Long beats Choe Il 3-0 (1-0)

MA Long (CHN) :

“Last time I met him it was two years ago, so long time ago. Anyway, I was fully prepared for this match. At the beginning, I was a little bit careful but then I controlled the tempo and I didn’t give him too much space and time. I think I played normally well in this tournament so far. For the next rounds, I will keep going and try to perform better.”

Day 3 - 1 May 2018

AGM

DAINTON Steve (ITTF CEO):

“World Championships were only in Asia and Europe before. We want to go in all the continents. The only time a World Championships took not place in Asia or Europe in all the ITTF history it was in Cairo (Egypt) in 1939. I think that if we really want to make an expansion, we have to go in different markets.”

Division One

Team China defeated Sweden 3-0 in the Women's Team group stage:

Zhu Yuling beats Bergstrom Linda 3-0 (3-0)

ZHU Yuling (CHN):

“I met a lot of difficulties at the very beginning of the game. I was not comfortable with her spin. Then I adapted myself to control the game and I finally won.”

Ding Ning beats Bergand Filippa 3-0 (2-0)

DING Ning (CHN):

“I think my opponent tried her best against me and she stayed positive. For my part, I just tried to do my best. This is our last match in this group, I think I played well. But for the next stages, teams will get stronger and stronger.”

Liu Shiwen beats Jonsson Jennifer 3-0 (1-0)

LIU Shiwen (CHN):

“I feel very excited to play in Halmstad. The atmosphere here is really good and the audience is passionate. It is really enjoyable.”

DING Ning before the game (CHN):

“This is the fifth game in group. We have well prepared the game against the host. I enjoyed the game. Fans also wait for my game and have to adapt the jet lag. I hope I can play well and wish they keep cheering for Chinese team.”

Team Romania defeated Chinese Taipei 3-0 in the Women’s Team group stage:

ELIZABETA Samara (ROM):

“We were so angry after the defeat against Netherlands. We came here as European champions with only one motive on our mind: to reach quarter-final and to play for medal. Netherlands was one of the adversaries that we knew we had to beat in order to achieve our goal. It was very hard today. I was two games down against Cheng I-Ching, a player I have never beaten her before. Bernie was in the same position against Chen Szu-Yu. It was very close, but we had to win. We did not have any other option but the victory.”

Team China defeated Singapore 3-1 in the Women’s Team group stage:

Feng Tianwei beats Wang Manyu 3-1 (1-0)

FENG Tianwei (SGP):

“Wang Manyu is a player of good ability; I have played her many times. With the age increases I try to find some improvement on fitness. So many aged players have achieved success like Federer in tennis. I hope to get a medal in this championship.”

WANG Manyu (CHN):

“Feng Tianwei is an experienced player. She gave me some pressure on the court and she is good at catch chance on the big point. Teammates gave me some advices for

preparation but I haven't deal well with all things. I need to build confidence again which is most important."

Team Russia defeated Sweden 3-2 in the Women's Team group stage:

Noskova Yana beats Linda Bergstrom 3-1 (3-2)

NOSKOVA YANA (RUS):

"It was a really difficult match because I already gave lot of energy in my first match against Matilda (lost 2-3). I tried to stay focus and fight. Now I feel unbelievably happy."

"I had played Linda many times before as a junior and always won but she has really improved, her defense is very solid. I was really afraid because two years ago in the match against Austria, where if I had won we would have gone up; I lost to Li Qiangbing and we went down. If I win we go up, if I lose we go down, it was in my mind all the time against Linda. After I lost the first game, I decided to play with more spin and to take some risks, she made some mistakes and things came good for me."

Ekholm Matilda beats Mikhailova Polina 3-1 (2-2)

EKHOLM Matilda (SWE):

"I certainly did not expect to win eight straight matches. I don't really know what happened. But I played pretty good. Now Linda has a big match to play. I always have confidence in her and she is improving."

Ekholm Matilda beats Noskova Yana 3-2 (1-1)

EKHOLM Matilda (SWE):

"I had a tough opponent and I had to give my very best. Somehow I made it. Thanks to the crowd I succeeded to win this match."

Mikhailova Polina beats Bergstrom Linda (1-0)

MIKHAILOVA Polina (RUS):

“I still feel a little bit stressed right now but of course I’m very happy because it was a very important match for our team. Against Linda we played so many times last year, it is always difficult and I had to be extremely patient because she improved a lot. I was a little bit lucky at the end but I think I was enough patient to win this game.”

“I’ve played Linda several times before, every time she plays better and better; when you play someone who is defender you must be patient and keep doing the same thing time and time again, not panic or take risks. Quite simply Matilda is a good player, she has good services, difficult to receive and if you make mistakes receiving service you are under pressure.”

Team Germany defeated Luxembourg 3-0 in the Women’s Team group stage:

Solja Petrisa (GER) after beating Luxembourg 3-0 in the fourth group match of women

SOLJA Petrisa (GER):

“It is not easy playing against Luxembourg especially Ni Xia Lian. But I am quite happy with my performance against her. But in the match I could feel the ball quite well and I was so focused. But I must admit that it is not always easy against Luxembourg.”

“We have lost two matches against strong teams and our goal before the tournament was to ensure that we win our matches against Brazil, Luxembourg and Thailand. Now we are hoping for victory against Thailand in order to advance from the group.”

Team Ukraine defeated Egypt 3-0 in the Women’s Team group stage:

Meshref Dina (EGY) after losing to Ukraine in the fourth group match of the women

MESHREF Dina (EGY):

“I must admit that it has not been easy playing in the Championship Division being our first time. All the teams are very strong and we really tried our best to ensure we were not disgraced. We will continue to fight to ensure we won't drop to the second division

and this is our immediate goal now having lost four matches. Both men and women teams will not give up at ensuring that we remain in the elite division.”

Team Sweden defeated Slovenia 3-1 in the Men’s Team group stage:

Karlsson Mattias beats Tokic Bojan 3-2 (3-1)

KARLSSON Mattias (SWE):

“It was a really hard match. I think this is the first time I beat Bojan so I’m really happy with my performance. Since the beginning of the tournament, I think we have played very well and the audience here has been fantastic. It is really cool to play with this support.”

Persson Jon beats Kozul Deni 3-1 (2-1)

PERSSON Jon (SWE):

“Yes of course it was important to win because it was 1-1. Now we take the lead again and Mattias has less pressure. I think I played good at the end. It is really fun to play here when you have the crowd in your back.”

Tokic Bojan beats Karlsson Kristian 3-2 (1-1)

TOKIC Bojan (SLO):

“I had the lead 9:5 in the fourth set and was very close to win. I also had a match point. With my team we missed so many chances in this tournament, so many match balls. I knew this thing would change and I just needed to be patient. For the next stages we will have strong teams and we don’t have a lot of confidence in this tournament, but we will maybe make a surprise.”

Karlsson Mattias beats Jorgic Darko 3-0 (1-0)

KARLSSON Mattias (SWE):

“I really played fantastic today and am really happy with my performance. It’s nice to come back stronger after the defeat from yesterday. It will probably be too difficult to achieve the first place in the group, but we never know.”

Team China defeated Portugal 3-0 in the Men’s Team group stage:

Lin Gaoyuan beats Apolonia Tiago 3-0 (3-0)

LIN Gaoyuan (CHN):

“It is always positive to win a match. Our team has already prepared every meeting. I think that the strongest opponent would be the one in the final.”

Fan Zhendong beats Geraldo Joao 3-2 (2-0)

FAN Zhendong (CHN):

“I made some mistakes technically but I told myself not to give up. Then I tried my best to control the tempo and finally I won. I was a little bit too conservative especially at the very beginning. Geraldo also made great shots in the first three sets. I had to stay calm and then I played better.”

Xu Xin beats Carvalho Diogo 3-0 (1-0)

XU Xin (CHN):

“It is the first time I played in this stadium even if I already came several times in Sweden. I hope I will have a good memory of this city.

Team Germany is really strong. We will fight against all the teams step by step.”

Division Two

Team Slovakia defeated Nigeria 3-1 in the Men's Team group stage:

Lubomir Pistej (SVK) after beating Nigeria 3-1 in the third group match of men

LUBOMIR Pistej (SVK):

“We knew that the Nigeria Team is a very good team especially Aruna Quadri who destroyed Wang Yang 3-0, while I defeated Segun Toriola and Samuel Novota also beat Olajide Omotayo. Only for Wang to finish up against Toriola; who is also a good player in the Nigerian team and I am happy that we won.”

“We were second seed in the second division and our target is to return to the elite division to be able to compete against the best teams.”

Toriola Segun (NGR) after losing 1-3 to Slovakia in the third round of the men

TORIOLA Segun (NGR):

“I am a little surprised that we lost because we tried to change our strategy against them in the match because we defeated them the last time we meet. Unfortunately our plan failed us to day. But I still believe we still have big change to finish second in the group.”

Day 2 - 30 April 2018

Division One

Team England defeat Team Japan 3-1 in the Men's Team group stage:

Liam PITCHFORD:

"I got a bit lucky in the first set, took advantage of that and got on top of him. I didn't really let him play his game."

"I was happy to finish it 3-0 against Harimoto and get the team back in the game! I watched Paul play him. Paul had a good chance, he was unlucky to lose 3-2."

"This morning Paul had given us a great start against Chinese Taipei and today against Jun Mizutani he played really well; his performances today really gave me confidence before I played Tomokazu Harimoto. I beat him at the World Team Cup in February and today I just tried to impose my game on him."

"I went in (the match with Jun Mizutani) with a game plan. Got a bit nervous at the end, but managed to get over the line. So yeah, I am over the moon and so happy for the team!"

Paul DRINKHALL:

"I lost out close in the first one, and then the lads went on and did the business. It was some of the best table tennis, I think, they have both played well!"

"A good match, I had some chances but it didn't happen, Jun Mizutani is a high quality player; this morning I was down 5-10 in the fifth against Chuang Chih-Yuan and won. Great wins for the team today but there is still a lot of table tennis left in this tournament."

"Hopefully there is more to come in this tournament and we keep proving we are the ones to watch!"

Sam WALKER:

“I think I played really well today, so did both the lads. We keep winning in the big tournaments, and people keep being surprised. And i'm not sure why, because we keep on delivering! So hopefully we can deliver a bit more!”

“Koki Niwa is a tremendous player but not today! No seriously he is a tremendous player but you must enter a match with the belief that you can win; we have such a good team spirit, we are all good friends and we all pull for each other. Now we must get ready for tomorrow.”

“We still have a job to do, we still got another couple of matches in the group. So hopefully we can go on and do the job there, get the first place in the group and go to the quarterfinals.”

Team Sweden defeated Belarus 3-1 in the Women's Team group stage:

Ekholm Matilda beats Pavlovich Viktoria (3-1)

EKHOLM Matilda (SWE):

“Defensive players are all different, so you cannot adopt the same tactic against them all. It depends on the backhand's rubber or their playing style. But I played so many times against Vika so I knew what I had to do and it worked. She's a really good player; in that sense it wouldn't have made sense if I won easily. I knew I had to fight on every point. As leader of my team, I don't give lot of advices. I just think that my teammates follow and learn for me in some things. Nevertheless, I give sometimes some technical advices at the practice.”

Trigoles Daria beats Jonsson Jennifer 3-1 (2-1)

TRIGOLOS Daria (BLR) :

“I was just thinking about what I had to do and also enjoying the game. I feel very good here in Halmstad with this atmosphere. I am happy to participate to such a wonderful competition.”

Ekholm Matilda beats Bogdanova Nadezhda 3-0 (2-0)

EKHOLM Matilda (SWE):

"I still feel a little bit tired. I struggled a lot with her serve today which made me nervous. But I finally managed to receive better and I could win. At the end of the set, when the game is very tight, I try to focus on my serve or my return. The first shot is the most important."

Bergstrom Linda beats Pavlovich Viktoria 3-1 (1-0)

BERGSTROM Linda (SWE):

"We started very good against Singapour yesterday; unfortunately we lost at the end. It was important that we still keep going. Last time, I lost 0-3 against her at the Champions League in February but it was very tight so I knew I would have a chance but I wasn't expecting to win."

Team Germany defeated Sweden 3-0 in the Men's Team group stage:

Ovtcharov Dimitrij beats Kallberg Anton 3-1 (3-0)

OVTCHAROV Dimitrij (GER):

"The last three sets were very tight. It was a tough match but I am satisfied of my performance especially because I had a long break due to an injury. So I am very pleased I could win against Anton. Of course we want to win the gold medal, we are very determined. Timo and I had an extraordinary good run at the end of the past year and now also Patrick is playing very well. Unfortunately I got injured, but the good think is that it is a long tournament and I feel that I'm playing better and better at every match. I hope I can get my pic at the end of the tournament."

Boll Timo beats Karlsson Mattias 3-0 (2-0)

BOLL Timo (GER):

"We have a great team and we are motivated to go far in the tournament. Sweden is a key opponent so we are very focused. Mattias is a very unusual player on the tour; you don't have often the chance to play against this style. The fact that we played many times last year was maybe a small advantage for me. Against him, it is all about little things, little placements. I think I did a great job."

Franziska Patrick beats Karlsson Kristian (3-2) (1-0)

FRANZISKA Patrick (GER):

“We know each other very well. I think we played six times in the last seven months. It is always tough against him, but I tried to stay focus, play my game and I’m happy that I won.”

Team Hong Kong China defeated Egypt 3-0 in the Men’s Team group stage:

Saleh Ahmed (EGY) after losing to 0-3 to Hong Kong in the third round of men

SALEH Ahmed (EGY):

“I think playing in the Championship has not been easy but we have been trying our best in the three matches played so far. Particularly the match against Germany which Omar Assar had a good performance while we also tried but we were just unlucky to have lost. Now we are out of fighting for the top three in the group as we will be aiming to maintain our status in the Championship.”

Team Brazil defeated Portugal 3-0 in the Men’s Team group stage:

Jean-Rene Mounié assesses performance of Brazil after beating Portugal 3-0

MOUNIE Jean-René (Coach BRA):

“Gustavo played really well, yesterday he beat Pavel Sirucek but today everything was better than yesterday, his movement was better, he was aggressive. He gave Brazil the best start possible. For Hugo it was a tough match, João Monteiro is a fighter, in serve and receive he is good; Hugo imposed himself on the match. Meanwhile was outstanding, he had played Tiago before and lost but he had shown that there distinct possibilities; today he showed responsibility. He followed the trend of the team.”

Team Russia defeated Korea DPR 3-2 in the Men's Team group stage:

Vlasov Sergei Russian Coach (RUS):

"I am very happy. We have a new team with young players because of Shibaev's injury. Sidorenko made a great last game and it will give him lot of confidence for the next stages. This team is the team of the future. They have to gain experience. They all are doing well and I am satisfied for that. Obviously, we don't have to forget our best players like Shibaev, but it is a good sign to see these young players performing at this level. I also want to thank team Italy, because we made the preparation with them in Firmino and it was really great!"

Team Belgium defeated Singapore 3-2 in the Men's Team group stage:

Lambiet Florent beats Poh Shao Feng Ethan 3-1 (3-2)

LAMBIET Florent (BEL):

"We expected to win against Singapore. They have a great player, Gao Ning, but the three others players are not as strong as him. We are a more uniform team as them. We don't speak of a specific goal with the team, but personally I want to pass the group stage. This would be great!"

Team Sweden defeated Hong-Kong China 3-2 in the Men's Team group stage:

Persson Jon beats Ho Kwan Kit 3-0 (3-2)

PERSSSON Jon (SWE):

"I needed to play aggressive against this kind of player. I started really good and then I had the confidence. I also think that he was a little bit stressed. He made some mistakes and I'm happy for that. We have a really good team spirit and this is also a reason why we can win this kind of match."

"Today I felt good, it was a hard match against Ho Kwan Kit; these are the matches in which you must want to play. You must really look forward to the challenge. Tactically I played well, importantly I was good in the serve and receive game; he was stressed."

Wong Chun Ting beats Karlsson Kristian 3-1 (2-2)

WONG Chun Ting (HKG):

"At the beginning of the game I was a little bit influenced by the fans but then I was focused on the match. Our team was prepared for the difficulties and troubles, but we helped each other's by charring our experience and analyze the tactics, so I have confidence in my teammates."

Karlsson Mattias beats Lam Siu Hang 3-1 (2-1)

KARLSSON Mattias (SWE):

"I am really happy, it was a tough match. I started very well and then he was getting always better so I'm really happy to get this win for the team. It won't be easy now but I have confidence in my teammates."

Karlsson Kristian beats Ho Kwan Kit 3-2 (1-1)

KARLSSON Kristian (SWE):

"It was a very important match, now it is 1-1. I really think and hope we will win against Hong-Kong. Sweden and Honk-Kong are the two main competitors for the second spot of the group so if we win this match we have a good line to make the playoffs."

Wong Chun Ting beats Persson Jon 3-1 (1-0)

WONG Chun Ting (HKG):

"I was really prepared for this match. I lost against him last time so I knew I had to be mentally prepared. I was first nervous and conservative but finally I found my tempo and won the match."

PERSSON Jon (SWE):

“I’d played Wong Chun Ting earlier this year in the ETTU Club Cup semi-final and won but today he played very well. He was very aggressive. I had my chances. In the first game I led 8-5 and lost, in the second 8-6 and lost.”

Team Japan defeated Belarus 3-0 in the Men’s Team group stage:

Harimoto Tomokazu beats Samsonov Vladimir 3-2 (1-0)

HARIMOTO Tomokazu (JAP):

“In the fourth game when I was losing 9-10 I just thought next point; then at 3-8 down in the fifth it was the same, just take one point at a time; Vladimir Samsonov is so experienced, for me it was important that I played really strongly against him.”

Niwa Koki beats Platonov Pavel 3-2 (2-0)

NIWA Koki (JAP):

“It’s the first time that I had played Pavel Platonov, I did not really know what to expect. In the first two games I wasn’t able to adjust to the pace of the play; it took me time to find a rhythm.”

Team China defeated 3-0 Czech Republic in the Men’s Team group stage:

Lin Gaoyuan beats Konecny Tomas 3-1 (3-0)

LIN Gaoyuan (CHN):

“It’s good to play in a team event because you have your team mates sitting on the bench supporting you; that really gives you confidence. Also, playing in a team event you must be ready from the very start and adapt quickly; it is only best of five games not best of seven, so you don’t have much time to recover. Today against Konecny, in the

third game he was much more positive but in the fourth I made changes and won reasonably comfortably."

LIU Guozheng (CHN):

"Here in Halmstad is different to London: you play five matches in the group, not two as in London so you have more chances to field young players. Lin Gaoyuan and Wang Chuqin have much to learn from senior players like Ma Long and Xu Xin; the main quality is that they fight."

Division Two

Team Belgium defeated Argentina 3-2 in the Women's Team stage group:

Lung Lisa (BEL) after beating Argentina 3-2 in the second group match of women

LUNG Lisa (BEL):

"The loss to Greece was indeed a bad memory for me but my teammates really helped me to be positive in this match against Argentina. It was a good win for us going into the next matches against Slovenia and Italy. We will remain focus and try to learn from top players. We are not thinking of promotion for now as we just want to learn and maybe in future we can be thinking of Championship Division. This win is good for our confidence after the disappointing loss to Greece."

Team Nigeria defeated Argentina 3-1 in the Men's Team stage group:

CIFUENTES Horacio (ARG) after losing 1-3 to Nigeria in the second group match of the men

CIFUENTES Horacio (ARG):

"I had taken a lot of time to watch Aruna Quadri's videos and I realized that his greatest strength was his powerful forehand. So I tried to control it, it was a bit difficult for me. I also wanted to play rally with him; it was very hard because he is very good in rallying. So I need to play more than 15 rallies if I hope to win a point against Aruna Quadri. Apart from that he is an experienced player among the top 30 in the world. Generally, the Nigerian team is very strong. We gave our best but it was just too hard for us to defeat them.

We have lost against Nigeria but we are not going to give up on our dream of fighting for promotion. We will take the next matches so serious and remain focused until we make the top three teams in the group that will advance to the knockout stage.

Omotayo Olajide (NGR) after beating Argentina 3-1 in the second group match of the men

OMOTAYO Olajide (NGR):

“When I was down 2-1 and it was 10-9 in the fourth game, I just told myself that I had to be careful and play with caution. But in the fifth game, I grew in confidence after winning the fourth one. This really motivated me very well to win the encounter. It was not that easy but with support from my teammates I was sure of my victory.

Playing in same team with Segun Toriola, Aruna Quadri and Bode Abiodun has really helped my game and I believe some of their pep talk has really been helping me just like it happened at the last Commonwealth Games in Australia.

My target in Sweden is just win all my matches and hopes that this will help the team to gain promotion to the Championship division. It is possible but it is not going to be easy at all.”

Team Denmark defeated Ukraine 3-1 in the Men’s Team group stage:

Groth Jonathan (DEN) after losing 1-3 to Ukraine in the second group match of the men

GROTH Jonathan (DEN):

“Of course our major goal was to return to the Championship Division and we will do what we can to achieve this. Losing to Ukraine today was painful but I believe we still have the chance to make it from the group.

MAZE Michael presence in the team means a lot to the young players because we have a lot to learn from him. As young players have all played in the championship division but the presence of Michael will really help us a lot as he still has a lot to offer. In longer perspective, we still have a lot to learn from Michael experience in the team.”

Day 1 - 29 April 2018

Division One

Team China defeated Belarus 3-0 in the Women's Team group stage:

Liu Shiwen beats Bogdanova Nadezhda 3-0 (1-0)

LIU Shiwen (CHN):

"This is first match , I still need to get adapted, not familiar with the opponent and the way she play, in addition the match was delayed. I need to up status match by match. The opponent in group is different so just to think how to win the game."

Team China defeated India 3-0 in the Women's Team group stage:

Wang Manyu beats Batra Manika 3-0 (2-0)

WANG Manyu (CHN):

"We know Batra won two champions in Commonwealth Games so we pay more attention to her, we get prepared by watching the videos, we get well prepared in both skills and mentality. At first some balls are not as the same as expected then I get to adapted. This is my first time for team championship so I felt a little bit nervous but according to my performance I think I have done well."

Ding Ning beats Das Mouma 3-0 (1-0)

DING Ning (CHN):

"India won the champion in Commonwealth Games so they are in good status, we get well prepared for how they play, I think it is normal that they play some good points at first. We haven't played Indian very often and recently they played well, so we get well prepared for the match."

Team Sweden defeated India 3-1 in the Women's Team group stage:

Ekholm Matilda beats Batra Manika 3-0 (3-1)

EKHOLM Matilda (SWE):

"I am really tired right now after my four matches. I am looking for going to sleep. For the next stages we will just keep going. My teammates played also very well and we will continue like that."

Patkar Madhurika beats Jonsson Jennifer 3-2 (2-1)

PATKAR Madhurika (IND):

"I think it was just about going on and never give up. In the last points I just played my game. I wasn't thinking about the score, I was just focused on my game. The support of the bench was important too. After winning the Commonwealth Games we have confidence, so I believe we can do a comeback. But now we have to think to play better."

Ekholm Matilda beats Das Mouma 3-0 (2-0)

EKHOLM Matilda (SWE):

"I think our last meeting helped both of us. We both had better tactics this time. Overall, it wasn't a bad match. I had to push myself very hard to win because in Qatar it was a more comfortable game. I am very pleased with my performance."

Bergstrom Linda beats Bartra Manika 3-1 (1-0)

BERGSTROM Linda (SWE):

"We knew it was very important against India, we looked some videos, remained focus and talked about tactics. In the last two years, I played a lot against this kind of player. So now I really have a tactic I want to play against these players and I succeeded today."

Team Romania defeated Czech Republic 3-1 in the Women's Team group stage:

Samara Elizabeta beats Matelova Hana 3-0

Elizabeta Samara (ROM):

"We made a good start of the Championships and I am very happy to say that all the girls are in very good shape in Sweden. We never suffer from lack of motivation but this is special moment for us. We are here as a European champions and we have to live up the reputation."

"Their style is very similar to mine, spin on spin, aggressive an attacking game; so it makes them very dangerous and hard to beat. I am happy firstly because of my victory over Hana Matelova, last time we played against each other it was very close three-one victory. Czech players are always hard to beat. I still have nightmares from the defeat six years ago in the first round of the European Championships."

Team Germany defeated Brazil 3-0 in the Women's Team group stage:

WINTER Sabine (GER) after beating Brazil 3-0 in first round of women

"First match of any competition is always very difficult and I knew that winning the match was very important for the team. Our aim is to finish among the top 12 teams but we must also be focused enough to achieve this. For now our first goal is to be among the top three teams in the group to be able to achieve our main target of making the top 12. We will not relent but continue to be optimistic of making this a reality."

Team Hungary defeated Egypt 3-0 in the Women's Team group stage:

POTA Georgina (HUN) after beating Egypt 3-0 in first round of women

"It was tough playing the first match because it is a new atmosphere having travelled from your country. First match is always very difficult but very important for any team. That we won 3-0 was good for the team but I must admit for me it was a bit tasking particularly playing with the new ball which we started playing with few days ago. So you have to adapt to it in competition like this. But this does not matter as long as we won our first game. Our realistic goal in this tournament is to finish among the top 12 and to do this we must first of all negotiate the group and that is what we believe we can achieve in this competition. We can dream of medal but realistically, finishing top 12 is an achievable dream."

MESHREF Dina (EGY) after losing 0-3 to Hungary in first round of women

"Being the first time we will be playing in the championship division, we will like to remain the division and that is why we must ensure we do well from the group stage. Despite losing to Hungary, we must remain focused and hoping that we remain in the championship in 2020. Also, the new ball made it very difficult for us against the Hungarian because this is the first time we will be using it. But we hope to adapt to it with time as we progress in the championship."

Team Singapore defeated Sweden 3-2 in the Women's Team group stage:

Yu Mengyu beats Bergstrom Linda 3-1 (3-2)

YU Mengyu (SGP):

“The crowd had an influence on me because he was encouraging Sweden. In this atmosphere, I was a little bit nervous. Finally, I succeeded to control the game.”

“Against Matilda, I couldn’t receive her serves and that put me under pressure; playing Linda, I played too fast in the first game but as the second game progressed I found a rhythm.”

Ekholm Matilda beats Feng Tianwei 3-2 (2-2)

EKHOLM Matilda (SWE):

“I am not really sure how I made this comeback. I got a lot of help from the spectators. I started to find my way after the second set. I just played with inspiration. I didn’t want to lose 0-3 in front of this crowd. Now, I feel confident for Linda’s match and hope that Singapore will feel the pressure.”

“My service that was my main weapon, I was sure she’d have problems. People have told me that with the new ball my serves would not be as effective but I find it’s no different, just go for it; give it one hundred per cent. Yes, I miss a few but I get more free points than I miss. Personally, I’m pleased today I was able to come back from two-nil down against Feng Tianwei and win; at the start of the day I was nervous but gradually I relaxed.”

FENG Tianwei (SGP):

“I was two-nil up and in the third I led 5-2; Matilda played more aggressively, I made mistakes. I made a lot of mistakes returning her services.”

Ekholm Matilda beats Yu Mengyu 3-2 (1-1)

EKHOLM Matilda (SWE):

“It was my first time against this opponent so I didn’t know what to expect. At the beginning I didn’t manage to play my tactic but hopefully I did it at the end. I am very pleased of my performance.”

Feng Tianwei beats Bergstrom Linda 3-1 (1-0)

FENG Tianwei (SGP):

“Actually I was a bit nervous because it is the first time I play on this court and because I lost the first set. Hopefully, after the two first sets I could find my rhythm. Anyway, I was mentally prepared for the difficulties.”

Team China defeated Russia 3-0 in the Men’s Team group stage:

Wang Chuqin beats Gadiev Vildan 3-0 (3-0)

WANG Chuqin (CHN):

"I think I played just ok, the performance on skills is not as well as usual. This is my first time for world team championship, I have some pressures and felt a little bit nervous, but it is positive that I won the game."

Ma Long beats Sidorenko Vladimir 3-0 (2-0)

MA Long (CHN):

"I think I played as usual, this is the first match, I hope I will perform better in the coming matches."

Team Republic of Korea defeated Poland 3-0 in the Men's Team group stage:

Jang Woojin beats Badowski Marek 3-1 (3-0)

JANG Woojin (KOR):

"I think the first game is very important. In that sense, Jeoung did a great job and it was easier for me."

Lee Sangsu beats Fertikowski Pawel 3-1 (2-0)

LEE Sangsu (KOR):

"I am really happy I won this game. Jeoung had a really tough game but he did well, so did I also. After losing the third set, I tried to be more offensive because I had to lead the game."

Jeoung Youngsik beats Dyjas Jakub 3-2 (1-0)

JEOUNG Youngsik (KOR):

"It is my first time playing at this Championships and it was very hard. But I am satisfied that I finally won. I helped my team and hope we can continue like this."

Team Germany defeated Egypt 3-2 in the Men's Team group stage:

OVTCHAROV Dimitrij (GER) after beating Egypt 3-2 in first round of the men

"The match was very tough and not as people has expected because the first match is always very difficult. At the end of the day, what mattered is that we won. I must also say that Omar Assar played very well today to have won two matches. For me I don't think I am 100 percent fit having rested for three weeks before the World Championship. I had thought I will be fit but from

the way I played today, I don't think I am fit fully. But this is World Championships, it is always good to fight for your country when it matters and that is why we will continue to fight as a team in this tournament."

OMAR Assar (EGY):

"Though we lost, I think I am happy that I did not disappoint the Halmstad fans. It was a good home coming for me beating Timo Boll in front of the Halmstad fans where I lived for over three years. I am so happy personally with my performance against the Germans and generally as a team it was a good start for us. I am happy I made my fans in Halmstad very happy today. Apart from winning against Timo Boll, I have learned a lot from him because we train together and he has defeated me three times before today. I am so fascinated with his behaviour outside the table even when he loses. He is very calm and respectful and for me these are parts of what I wish to learn and will learn from him in my new club. He has brought a lot of positive to table tennis and I want to continue to learn from him."

Team Sweden defeated Romania 3-0 in the Men's Team group stage:

Persson Jon beats Crisan Adrian 3-2 (3-0)

PERSSSON Mattias (SWE):

"There is always a little bit of pressure when you play at home but it is better to take advantage of it. Anyway, it was a nice feeling to play here. We want to pass the group stage and then the goal will be to reach a medal."

Karlsson Mattias beats Szocs Hunor 3-1 (2-0)

KARLSSON Mattias (SWE):

"I am really happy about this start and about my performance too. It is special to play at home and I will give my best."

Karlsson Kristian beats Ionescu Ovidiu 3-0 (1-0)

KARLSSON Kristian (SWE):

"I feel incredible. This is the start we needed. I hope we can continue like this. The crowd helped me a lot, I enjoyed it! We try to take advantage on it."

Division Two

Team Nigeria defeated Turkey 3-0 in the Men's Team group stage:

ARUNA Quadri (NGR) after beating Turkey 3-0 in first round of the men

"We won 3-0 but you cannot judge the match by the win because it was a very difficult match. We arrived late to Sweden and we did not have time to warm up until few minutes to the match. Also adjusting to the new ball was not that easy but as the tournament progresses we will get used to it. We are here for a mission and we hope we can achieve it by getting promoted to the championship division having missed narrowly in 2016 in Malaysia."

GUNDUZ Ibrahim (TUR) after losing to Nigeria 0-3 in first round of the men

"It was indeed a difficult match particularly against one of the most famous players in the world – Aruna Quadri. His powerful forehand shot was very difficult for me to control while his service confused me a lot. There is no doubt that we lost to a good team. For me the Nigerian team is a strong side and they deserved the victory."

Team Argentina defeated Bulgaria 3-1 in the Men's Team group stage:

SANCHI Francisco (ARG)

"We know that the group we are in is a very tough group particularly with teams like Nigeria and Slovakia who have quality players. Our first target is to qualify from the group which means we have to finish among the top three teams in the group. We had lost to Slovakia in the past but in recent times we had not played against Nigeria. We don't want to drop from the group by ensuring that we play very well in this competition and hope that we can also do well individually to help my world ranking."

Division Three

Team Portugal defeated Algeria 3-0 in the Women's Team group stage:

Oliveira Leila (POR) after beating Macau in the women's second group match

"First of all our target is to qualify from the group and I think things are going on well for us having won two matches in the group. Returning to the second division is one of our targets unfortunately it is going to be hard because we are not here with our best players. We came with two junior players which I think is good for them because they have been playing very well as they are not under any pressure. But I also believe it is possible to return to second division."

Team Congo Brazzaville defeated New Zealand 3-1 in the Men's Team group stage

LAWAL Abiodun (CGO)

"Our first main goal is to ensure we return to the second division and that means we must play very well in the group. There is no doubt that it is not going to be easy but for me I want to use this competition to get myself back to the ITTF ranking particularly with the new system of ranking that will help players that perform well in competition of this magnitude."

Day 0 - 28 April 2018

Press Conference

Thomas Weikert (ITTF President):

"First, we found here a very nice venue and very good conditions. Our goal is to make this event the best media presentation of our sport we ever done. Last year it was already a great event in Düsseldorf, with very good media data, but everything is in place to achieve our goal to do better this year."

Timo Boll (GER):

"We are effectively seeded number one, but we don't feel like the favourites. Last year we had a great year so I hope we will continue in this way. We are happy that Ovtcharov is here and healthy. But China, Japan and Korea will be hard to defeat. And obviously Sweden!"

"Harimoto is already one of the best player in the world. He is really motivated which is a special thing for his age. I remember myself at this age and my coaches had to force me a little bit to practice hard. It is a good sign for him to maybe become one day the best player in the world."

Ding Ning (CHN):

"We will do our best to keep our trophy. We are well prepared for it. Personally, I don't know if I am physically at 100% but I will give everything for my team."

Tomokazu Harimoto (JPN):

"It is the first time I play at the World Team Championships and playing against the Top players in the world, like Timo, is something I was looking for."

Jorgen Persson (SWE):

"I am happy I could help the Swedish team, I practiced a little bit with them. Now my goal is to come in the VIP warm-up and play some balls there. Anyway, I am happy to be here in my hometown. I hope looking for a fantastic World Team Championships."