



FIVB WORLD LEAGUE PREVIEWS WEEK 9, FINAL SIX – JULY 16-20, 2014

Semifinal 1: Iran - USA (19 July)

Head-to-Head

- Iran and USA have never before met in the World League.
- Iran will be seeking the scalp of a fifth former WL champion. They have beaten Italy, Brazil, Cuba and Poland at least once before.
- Iran have won four of six against World League opponents from the Americas.
- USA have won 15 of their last 16 WL meetings with opponents from Asia, including each of their last five. The last Asian side to trip up Team USA was China on 4 July 2009.

Iran

- Iran have reached the World League semifinal for the first time in team history. With their victory against Brazil they eliminated defending champions Russia.
- Iran are the first team from Asia to finish in the top-four of the World League.
- With just 24 World League matches, Iran are by far the least experienced team in the semifinal.
- Iran are the only team in the top-four without any World League silverware. They could become the 10th team to claim a World League medal.

USA

- USA have reached the last four teams for the fifth time in WL history. Four of these came in the last eight World League editions (including 2014).
- USA could reach the final of the World League for the third time in history, after their first place in 2008 and their second place in 2012.
- USA won their last semifinal in 2012 by defeating Cuba in straight sets.
- After starting the 2014 World League with seven consecutive wins, USA have lost four of their last seven WL matches. Three of those defeats came in straight sets.



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Semifinal 2: Italy - Brazil (19 July)

Head-to-Head

- This will be the 29th World League meeting between these teams. Each team has won 14 of the previous 28 encounters.
- They split their four WL encounters this season. Remarkably, each team won both away matches with Brazil triumphing 3-1 in Bologna last 3 July and 3-1 in Milan last 6 July.
- Brazil have won six of their last eight WL meetings with Italy. Italy's two wins in that span date back to last May, when the visitors emerged victorious twice in Jaraguá do Sul.
- These teams have won 17 of 24 previous World League titles between them. Brazil have won the competition on nine occasions, Italy on eight occasions.
- Each of the last eight WL meetings between these two teams have been decided in four sets.

Italy

- Italy have reached the last four for the 17th time in WL history and for the second year in a row. Only Brazil have finished in the top four of the competition more often (19, including this season).
- With a semifinal spot, Italy have secured a top-four finish in the World League for the second year in a row, after last year's third place. After securing a top-four ranking in the first 15 editions of the WL (1990-2004), Italy did not finish higher than a sixth place until 2013.
- Italy have reached the World League final 11 times. Last year they were ousted by Russia 3-1 in the semifinals.

Brazil

- Brazil will finish in the top-four of the World League for the 19th time, most of all teams. They have now reached the final-four teams for the 15th time in their last 16 WL appearances (including 2014). They only finished outside the top-four in 2012 (6).
- They have also reached the most WL finals of all teams (13), of which 11 came in the last 13 editions.
- Brazil are seeking their first World League championship since 2010. That season was the last of a string of 10 seasons, in which Brazil secured the title eight times.
- Brazil are unbeaten in their last four semifinal matches in the World League (2009, 2010, 2011 and 2013).