



FIVB WORLD LEAGUE PREVIEWS WEEK 4 – JUNE 13-15, 2014

Pool A: Iran - Brazil (June 13 & 15)

Head-to-Head

- Last week Iran and Brazil met for the first time in the World League. Brazil won the first match in 5 sets (3-2), Iran won the second match in straight sets (3-0).
- Shahram Mahmoudi was top scorer for Iran in both matches with 22 points (21 spikes) in the first match and 18 points (16 spikes) in the second match.
- Top scorers for Brazil were Santos Junior with 16 points in the first match and Wallace with 9 points (all spikes) in the second match.
- Brazil have won 26 out of 29 World League matches against Asian opposition. Before their defeat against Iran last week, their previous World League defeat against an Asian team had come more than 20 years ago, against Japan on July 4, 1993.

Iran

- It is the second time that Iran participate in the World League. Last season they lost five out of 10 matches. With two defeats against Brazil this week they will already have lost six times in this year's campaign.
- Iran beat Brazil 3-0 last week and they can record two straight set wins in a row for the first time in the World League.
- Iran have already lost three matches in straight sets in the 2014 World League. The only team with more straight set defeats is Japan (5).
- Seyed Mohammad Mousavi has the best average of blocking per set (1.00) in Group 1 of the 2014 World League. Mir Saeid Marouflakani leads all players in Group 1 on an average of 6.36 setups per set.

Brazil

- Brazil can lose two matches in a row by a 3-0 scoreline for the second time in World League history after straight set defeats against Italy and Yugoslavia in 2000.
- Brazil have already lost four matches in the intercontinental round this season. The last time Brazil lost five times in the intercontinental round was in the 1995 World League.
- With two losses against Iran this week Brazil can equal their worst World League start since 1991 when they lost six of their first eight matches.



Pool A: Poland - Italy (June 13 & 15)

Head-to-Head

- Poland and Italy have met on eight previous occasions in the World League. Italy have won seven and Poland have won one, their first encounter in 1999 (3-2).
- Their last two encounters took place last week in the World League with Italy winning twice by 3-1 in sets.
- Ivan Zaytsev was Italy's top scorer in both matches against Poland last week with 24 points (23 spikes) in the first match and 18 points (14 spikes) in the second match.
- Top scorers for Poland were Grzegorz Bociek with 24 points (21 spikes) in the first match and Rafal Buszek with 18 points (17 spikes) in the second match.

Poland

- Since winning their first and only World League title in 2012, Poland have lost nine of their next 14 matches in the competition.
- Poland have won only five sets in this year's World League. By winning only one set in the next two matches against Italy, Poland can equal their record low of winning only six sets in six matches in the World League of 1998. Poland won only seven sets in six matches in the World League of 1999 and 2009.

Italy

- Italy have won their first six matches of their 2014 World League campaign and combined with last season they have won seven in a row.
- By winning the next two matches against Poland, Italy will have won their first eight matches of this campaign. The only time Italy have started a World League campaign with more wins was in 1992 with nine consecutive wins.
- Italy have lost only four sets in their six matches in the 2014 World League. Their best record stems from 1992 when they lost three sets in eight matches. In the 1996 and 1997 World League, Italy lost only five sets in seven matches.
- Ivan Zaytsev is top scorer of group 1 of the 2014 World League with 112 points. Ivan is also on top of the servers list in group 1 with an average of 0.45 by set.



Pool B: USA – Serbia (June 13 & 14)

Head-to-Head

- USA and Serbia (including Yugoslavia and Serbia and Montenegro) have met eight times before in the World League, with Serbia winning on six occasions .
- This will be a replay of the 2008 World League final, when USA beat Serbia 3-1 to grab their first ever World League title.
- Serbia's last three World League wins over USA were all in straight sets.
- Kawika Shoji (USA) and Srecko Losonac (SRB) are teammates at German side SCC Berlin.

USA

- USA have won their opening four matches of this World League campaign and can kick off with five consecutive wins for the first time since 2000 (10 wins).
- USA have won their last four World League matches against European opposition and can win five in a row for the first time since 2008 (six wins).
- Erik Shoji has a receiving efficiency of 62.5%, best of all players in group 1 (Pool A and B) this World League season.

Serbia

- Serbia have won their opening four matches of this World League campaign and can win their first five matches for the first time since 2010.
- Serbia have never won their first six of a World League season.
- Uros Kovacevic has a spike rate of 52.8% this World League season, making him the most efficient player of group 1 (Pool A and B) in this category.



Pool B: Russia – Bulgaria (June 14 & 15)

Head-to-Head

- Bulgaria and Russia (including Soviet Union and the Commonwealth of Independent States) have met 14 times before in the World League. Russia have won 10 matches, Bulgaria are on four wins.
- Russia have won six of their last seven World League matches against Bulgaria.
- Before claiming gold at the 2012 Olympic Games, Russia beat Bulgaria 3-1 in the semifinal.
- Todor Aleksiev (BUL) plays for Russian side Gazprom Yugra Surgut, alongside teammates Artem Smoliar (RUS) and Alexey Rodichev (RUS).

Russia

- Defending champions Russia started this World League season with four defeats. They can lose five World League matches in a row for the first time since 1997 (10 defeats).
- Last season, 2012 champions Poland also kicked off with four consecutive defeats. Russia can become the first defending champions to start next World League season with five defeats in a row.
- Sergey Savin's 54.3% efficiency as receiver is the third highest in Group 1 of this year's World League.

Bulgaria

- Bulgaria are on a seven-match losing streak in the World League and can lose eight consecutive matches for the first time in the competition.
- Bulgaria kicked off this World League campaign with four defeats, which marks their worst start to a World League season. They began with four wins last year.
- They are four sets short of their 500th set win. They would become the seventh country to reach 500+ set wins.



Pool C: Canada – Belgium (June 13 & 14)

Head-to-Head

- The only two World League meetings from Belgium and Canada came last week, with both teams winning once.
- Debutants Belgium have won three out of four games in the World League so far. Their only loss was the first home-match against Canada (3-2) .
- They also faced each other twice at the world championships with Belgium winning 3-0 in 1974 and Canada taking revenge in 1978 (3-0).

Canada

- Canada have won 10 of their last 12 matches in the World League. Only Brazil (last year) and Belgium (this year) have defeated them during this run.
- The last time Canada lost two games in a row was in 2012, against Brazil and Poland.
- Daniel Lewis is this season's best digger in the World League with an average of 3.12 digs per set.

Belgium

- After starting the World League with four home matches, the match on June 13 will be Belgium's first away match.
- Of all debutants this year, Belgium have won most games (3), most sets (11) and highest winning percentage (75%).
- Matthijs Verhanneman has a receiving efficiency of 91.78%, best of all players this World League season.



Pool C: Finland – Australia (June 14 & 15)

Head-to-Head

- Finland and Australia meet for the second weekend in a row after each won 3-2 last week in Canberra.
- In both matches Finland scored 106 points against Australia, winning one game and losing the other.
- In both matches Australia scored more than the 106 points Finland scored (113 and 108). The 113 points were enough to win, the 108 were not sufficient.

Finland

- Finland have lost eight of their last 10 matches in the World League, winning once against Australia (last week) and against Netherlands last year.
- Finland have won their last match. They are looking for their first back-to-back victories in the World League since beating Korea Republic on 8 and 9 June 2013.
- They have played three five-set-matches in a row for the first time since 2011. They have never had a run of four five-set-matches.

Australia

- Australia's 3-2 win against Finland last week was their first ever win in the World League.
- With only one win in 16 matches, Australia have won only 6.3% of their World League matches. Only Tunisia's percentage is lower: 0 from three so far.
- Thomas Edgar has scored 86 points, third most of all players in Group 2 (pool C, D, E).



Pool D: France – Germany (June 13 & 15)

Head-to-Head

- France have won both previous matches against Germany in the World League, both last week 3-1 and 3-0.
- Germany have finished higher than France in the last four World League seasons. The last time France were ranked higher was in 2002: France 7th, Germany 9th.
- They have each won a match against each other the last two times they faced each other at the European Championships, in 2007 (GER 3-0) and 2009 (FRA 3-1).

France

- France have won their last nine games. The last time they were beaten was last year against Brazil (3-2). This streak marks their best in World League history.
- Last week France beat Germany in straight sets. It was their fourth straight-set-win this season, more than any other team in this season's World League.
- They have never won five matches with a 3-0 score in a single World League season.
- Of all teams in this year's World League France have the highest won-lost points ratio: 1.187.

Germany

- Germany have lost three of the last four matches in the World League. They had won their first two matches, both against Japan.
- Germany lost their last two games and can lose three in a row for the first time since 2011 (vs BUL-RUS-RUS).
- At this moment Christian Fromm is the top scorer of the second group with 91 points - 81 spikes, 7 blocks and 3 serves.



Pool D: Japan – Argentina (June 14 & 15)

Head-to-Head

- Japan and Argentina have played each other six times in the World League. Argentina have won all six matches.
- Japan have only won two sets in these six matches. In 1997 and last week they took one set.
- Argentina's unbeaten status against Japan is their only 100% winning record against any team in the World League.

Japan

- The only other two teams in the World League that Japan have played a minimum of six games against and have never won are Netherlands (6) and Cuba (12).
- Japan have lost their last eight matches in the World League. Last year's back-to-back victory against Finland ended a streak of 22 losses.
- Kunihiro Shimizu is the second highest scorer in group 2 with 87 points - 80 spikes, 4 blocks, 3 serves.

Argentina

- Argentina have won their last two matches. The last time Argentina won three consecutive games was back in 2011 when they beat Serbia, Italy and Bulgaria.
- Argentina have won three of their last 17 World League matches, with all wins clinched this year.
- Argentina have lost their last four five-set-matches in the World League, since they beat Portugal 3-2 in 2012.



Pool E: Czech Republic - Netherlands (June 13 & 14)

Head-to-Head

- This is the first and second ever meeting between these nations in the World League.
- For the Czech Republic, the Netherlands are their 10th different opponent in the competition.
- Of these 10 opponents, Czech Republic have faced five at least twice and do not have a negative balance against all these six nations.
- For the Netherlands, the Czech Republic will be their 19th different World League opponents.

Czech Republic

- Czech Republic have won seven of their eight home matches in the World League. Their only defeat was their last home match in 2003, against Greece (3-2).
- They have won their last two matches 3-2. In total they have played five sets in almost one-third of all their World League matches: 6 of 21. For Holland this is almost 20% (49 of 257).
- Habr Filip is the setter with the highest average of 7.35 per set of all players in Group 1 and 2 (Pools A, B, C, D and E).

Netherlands

- The Netherlands have won four of their last five away matches in the World League, only losing their last away match, against Finland last year (3-1).
- The Netherlands have won at least one set in each of their last 16 World League matches, dating back to 2010. Bulgaria is the last team to hold the Netherlands from taking a set, winning twice with 3-0 in 2010. The Netherlands lost their last match against Portugal and can lose back-to-back World League matches for the first time in four years, when they lost seven in a row in 2010.



Pool E: Korea Republic - Portugal (June 14 & 15)

Head-to-Head

- These nations met twice before in the World League. Both matches were last year in Portugal, with Korea winning both matches 3-1.
- These teams also met once at the World Championships. In 1956 (58 years ago), Portugal defeated Korea 3-0 in a Consolation Round.
- Korea also has a 100% record against Egypt in the World League (4 matches).

Korea Republic

- Korea have lost their last four home matches in the World League. They last won at home against Japan last year (twice with 3-1).
- They lost their last nine at home against European opposition, since beating France in 2011.
- If Korea lose both matches, they will have conceded 500 sets in the World League and become the fourth country to concede at least 500 sets after Japan, Cuba and Italy.

Portugal

- Jose Joao has an average spike rate of 68%, most of all players in the 2014 World League.
- Marcel Keller Gil and Seyed Mohammad Mousavi (IRI) are the only players with an average block per set of 1.00 in the 2014 World League.
- Ferreira Alexandre has an average of 0.47 aces per set, most of all group 1 and 2 players in this World League season. Only Group 3 players Yuan Zhi (CHN) and Zhong Weijum (CHN) have a higher average.



Pool F: Tunisia - Turkey (June 13)

- Tunisia play this set of round robin matches at home and start off against the nation that will host the finals for Pool F and G.
- Tunisia started their debut campaign with three defeats, including a 3-1 against fellow debutants Turkey. This was Turkey's only win last week.
- Turkey are already qualified for the Final Four as they are the hosts. Tunisia are eliminated after losing all three matches 3-0 or 3-1 in the first weekend.

Pool F: Mexico - Cuba (June 13)

- This match features the top two teams in Pool F.
- Cuba beat Mexico 3-0 last week in the match with the shortest duration (1h20) in Group 3.
- This was Cuba's only straight sets win last weekend and Mexico's only straight sets defeat.
- If Cuba beat Mexico 3-0 or 3-1, and Turkey lose to Tunisia, Cuba will be sure of winning Pool F and earning a spot for the Final Four.

Pool F: Tunisia - Cuba (June 14)

- Cuba kept their perfect record against African sides in the World League last week, by beating Tunisia 3-1. They also met Egypt on eight total occasions in 2006 and 2007, winning all.
- Tunisia scored 89 points against Cuba, most for them in a single match last weekend.
- Three of the four best spikers from last weekend's Group 3 action will meet in this match. Hichem Kaabi (TUN) leads with a 61.40% success rate, while Osmany Santiago Uriarte Mestre (CUB, 54.79) and Rolando Cepeda Abreu (CUB, 51.92) are in third and fourth.

Pool F: Mexico - Turkey (June 14)

- These teams played for the first time in a major international tournament last week. This was the only match in Pool F last week that went to a fifth set (3-2 MEX win).
- Turgay Dogan (TUR, 72.22) was the receiver with the highest efficiency rate in Group 3 last weekend. Hasan Yesilbudak (TUR, 63.16) is in third on this ranking, Burak Gungor Baturalp (TUR, 62.20) in fourth.
- Mexico were the only debutants in Group 3 (Pool F & G) with more than one win last weekend (2).



Pool F: Turkey - Cuba (June 15)

- This will be Cuba's 350th match in the World League. They are the third country to reach this mark, after Italy and Brazil.
- This match could well be between two teams that will meet in Bursa during the Final Four in two weeks. Turkey have already qualified as hosts while Cuba are coming into week 4 as Pool F leaders.
- Last week, the fourth (and final) set ended 33-31 for Cuba. Cuba scored 33 (or more) points in a single set for the fifth time. They have won four of these five marathon sets.

Pool F: Tunisia - Mexico (June 15)

- Mexico won the match between these teams 3-0 last week. They conceded only 62 points, fewest of all teams in a single match in Pool F this season.
- Anouer Taouerghi (TUN) is one of two players who are in the top three in two individual statistical categories after last weekend. He is second in digs and in receiving. The other player is Maurice Torres (PUR, Pool G), who leads in scoring and is second in blocking.
- Two matches in Pool F have been decided in straight sets this year, and both involve Mexico: 3-0 victory over Tunisia, 3-0 defeat against Cuba.

Pool G: Slovakia - Puerto Rico (June 13)

- Both teams won their first match in World League history last weekend. Slovakia beat Spain 3-1 on the opening day and Puerto Rico beat Slovakia 3-2 on the second day of play.
- Puerto Rico played the two longest matches in 2:27 against Slovakia (3-2 victory) and 2:37 against Spain (3-2 defeat).
- Slovakia scored 100 points against Puerto Rico last week, their highest number in a single match in the World League thus far.

Pool G: China - Spain (June 13)

- China will secure participation in the Final Four if they beat Spain and Puerto Rico beat Slovakia 3-2 in the other match in Pool G on this day.
- The first set between China and Spain ended 31-29 in China's favour last week. This equalled China's second-highest number of points in a single set in the World League. Only in 2009 against Italy (3-0 victory), they scored more: 34 in the third set.
- After beating Spain 3-0 last week, China have now won three out of nine World League matches against Spain. They had lost the last four coming into this season.



Pool G: Spain - Puerto Rico (June 14)

- Last week's 3-2 win by Spain was the first match between the two countries.
- Puerto Rico and Spain played the longest match in group 3 (Pool F & G) this year. Spain won after 2:37.
- Maurice Torres (PUR) is one of two players who are in the top three in two individual statistical categories after last weekend. He leads in scoring and is second in blocking. The other player is Anouer Taouerghi (TUN, Pool F), who is second in digging and receiving. No Spanish player is ranked in the top three of a specific category.

Pool G: China - Slovakia (June 14)

- Slovakia were the only team last weekend to claim a set against China, when they took the first set 25-23.
- China have three leaders of individual statistical categories: Liang Chunlong (CHN, blocking), Zhi Yuan (CHN, serving), Hui Chu (CHN, digging). The best Slovakian rank in a category is fourth, by Juraj Zatko (SVK) in serving and setting and Matej Kubs (SVK) in digging.
- China have won their first three matches in a World League campaign for the first time ever.

Pool G: Puerto Rico - China (June 15)

- China can win their 50th World League match today. They come into this weekend with 47 victories in 183 matches.
- Puerto Rico managed to score only 65 points in their 3-0 defeat against China, the fewest points of any team in Pool G last weekend. Later last weekend, they scored the most points of all teams: 111 points against Spain in a 3-2 defeat.
- If China win all three matches this week, they reach six victories in a single World League season for the third time in 15 appearances. They had six wins in 2008 and nine in 1993.

Pool G: Spain - Slovakia (June 15)

- Slovakia beat Spain 3-1 last weekend on their World League debut. They scored 26 points in set four in that match, most for them in any World League set so far, but lost 28-26.
- This is the only all-European meeting in group 3 (Pool F & G) this season.
- This match features the only two teams without a single player in any top three of an individual statistical category.