



FIVB WORLD LEAGUE PREVIEWS WEEK 1 – JUNE 02-04, 2017

Pool A1: Brazil - Poland (02 June)

Head-to-Head

- Brazil won their most recent major encounter with Poland, a straight-set win in the 2016 World League.
- Poland had won four of the previous five encounters, including the gold medal match at the 2014 World Championship.
- In the World League, Brazil have won five of their last seven meetings with Poland.
- At 217cm Poland's Bartlomiej Lemanski and Brazil's Renan are the tallest players in this year's World League competition.

Brazil

- Brazil will make their 28th World League participation and join Italy as the only ever-presenters in the competition that was installed in 1990.
- Brazil are the reigning Olympic champions and in search of their first World League crown since 2010.
- Brazil have won the World League on a record nine occasions.
- In 2016, Mauricio Souza's nine blocks in the match against France on 3 July were a season-high in the World League.

Poland

- This is Poland's 20th participation in the World League. They will appear in the competition for the 20th season in a row.
- Winning the World League in 2012 still ranks as Poland's best performance in the competition. They have not finished in the top three since.
- Poland finished fifth in the World League last season.



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Pool A1: Italy - Iran (02 June)

Head-to-Head

- Italy have won their last three major encounters with Iran, matches in the 2015 World Cup, 2016 World League and 2016 Olympic Games. Italy won all three in straight sets.
- Iran's last major victory over Italy came in the first round at the 2014 World Championship (3-1).
- Since 2013, they have met in the World League eight times, with Italy leading the series 5-3.

Italy

- Italy will make their 28th World League participation and join Brazil as the only ever-presenters in the competition that was installed in 1990.
- Italy have been crowned World League champions eight times and in that respect only trail Brazil's nine.
- Italy last won the World League in 2000 and have not reached the final since 2004.

Iran

- Iran will make their fifth World League participation and will appear in the competition for the fifth season in a row.
- A fourth place finish in 2014 ranks as Iran's best performance in a single World League campaign.
- Last season, Iran recorded an eighth place finish in the World League.



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Pool B1: Belgium - Canada (02 June)

Head-to-Head

- Belgium and Canada have been drawn together once before in World League history. In the 2014 edition, these nations clashed a total four times in the intercontinental rounds, with both teams winning on two occasions.
- Their only other competitive meetings at world level came at the 1974 and 1978 World Championships. In 1978, Canada beat Belgium in straight sets (consolation round 2). And in 1974, Belgium recorded a 3-0 group stage win over Canada.

Belgium

- Belgium will make their fourth World League participation and will appear for a fourth season in a row.
- A ninth place finish last season is their best performance in a single campaign.
- Belgium finished 11th in their debut season and then 12 in the next.
- Belgium won their opening match in all their previous three World League appearances.

Canada

- Canada will appear in the World League for the sixth consecutive season.
- This will be Canada's 11th overall participation in the competition.
- Their best finish in the competition is still their seventh place from 1992.
- Canada have won 10 of their last 11 World League matches. The only exception in that run was the five-set defeat against Finland on 3 July 2016.
- Canada won their opening match in each of their last seven World League participations. The last time they kicked off with a defeat was in 1999 (3-1 against Brasil).



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Pool B1: Serbia - United States (02 June)

Head-to-Head

- Serbia (incl. Serbia and Montenegro) and United States will meet each other for the 14th time in World League history, with USA winning five and Serbia eight of the previous 13 encounters.
- This will be a replay of the 2008 World League final, when United States beat Serbia 3-1 (26-24, 23-25, 25-23, 25-22) on 27 July 2008.
- In 2015, Serbia reached the World League final after a five-set victory over United States in the semifinals.

Serbia

- Serbia are the defending champions after winning the World League for the first time last season.
- No team has won the World League in back-to-back seasons since Brazil won in both 2009 and 2010.
- Serbia will make their 20th participation in the competition and that includes appearances they made as Yugoslavia and as Serbia and Montenegro.

United States

- United States will make their 20th World League participation. They will appear in the competition for the 12th successive season.
- Team USA are two-time winners of the World League. They triumphed in 2008 and 2014.
- Last season, they finished fifth and did not make it into the top three for the first time since 2013 (12th).



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Pool C1: France - Bulgaria (02 June)

Head-to-Head

- France and Bulgaria will meet each other for the 13th time in the World League. Both teams have won six matches.
- The last encounter was the final of Group 2 in 2015 when France won 3-0.
- Bulgaria last beat France in 2013 when they won 3-2 and 3-0.
- Their last encounter was at the Olympic Qualifying Tournament in January 2016, when France won 3-0.

France

- France finished in third place last season, meaning that they have won all medals -gold, silver and bronze- exactly once in the World League.
- In 2015, France won the World League, beating their previous best performance from 2006. They finished runners-up that season.
- France will make their 22nd World League appearance and their 19th in succession.
- In 2016, Antonin Rouzier was top scorer of the final round in Group 1 on 88 points.

Bulgaria

- Bulgaria will make their 20th World League appearance and their 15th in succession.
- Their best finish is fourth place, which they have achieved on five separate occasions.
- Only one team has more participations without ever finishing in the top three than Bulgaria's 20, Japan (24).



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Pool C1: Russia - Argentina (02 June)

Head-to-Head

- Russia (including Soviet Union and CIS) and Argentina have met once before in the World League. Last year, Argentina claimed a straight-set victory over Russia in Group A.
- These nations most recently met in a competitive match at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games (9 August 2016), when Argentina beat Russia 3-1 in the preliminary round.
- Russia's last victory over Argentina at a major tournament came on 12 September 2015, when they won 3-1 at the 2015 World Cup.

Russia

- Russia have finished outside the top four in each of the previous three World League seasons, after claiming their most recent overall victory in the competition in 2013.
- Their 2013 triumph was one of three World League titles for Russia. They also emerged victorious in 2002 and 2011.
- Russia will be making their 26th participation and that includes this team campaigning as Soviet Union and the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Argentina

- Argentina will make their 19th appearance in the World League.
- Argentina will take part in the competition for the ninth successive season.
- Argentina secured their best finish in the competition in 2011. They came fourth that season.