



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

Pool A2: Czech Republic - Finland (03 June)

Head-to-Head

- This will be the first time Czech Republic and Finland meet in the World League.
- They faced each other four times at major championships, with Czech Republic (including as Czechoslovakia) winning all four matches.
- Their last encounter was at the European Championship in 1997 when the Czechs won 3-2.
- This is the only match in which Finland won a set against Czech Republic as all other matches finished in straight set victories for Czech Republic (all as Czechoslovakia).

Czech Republic

- Czech Republic lost their opener by 3-2 against Korea.
- In their last three participations (2014-2015-2016) they lost the first match in the edition each time, but also won the second match.
- Michal Finger scored a team-high 22 points in the first match, more than double the amount of the second prolific scorer of the team, Vladimir Sobotka (10).
- Last season, Finger scored a total of 137 points for the team, to become the Czech top scorer.

Finland

- Finland lost the opening match of this year's World League by 3-1 against Slovenia.
- Last season, Finland also lost their opener against Japan, then in straight sets, but followed that loss with three wins.
- They can lose their first two matches in a single edition for the third time in four editions after suffering this in 2014 (first three) and 2015 (first four).
- Antti Ropponen is Finland's top scorer with 18 points. Last year (2016), Ropponen scored only 16 points in the total World League.



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Pool A2: Korea - Slovenia (03 June)

Head-to-Head

- Korea and Slovenia will meet for the first time in the World League.
- These two teams have never faced each other in any other major competition.
- Slovenia have won both of their two World League encounters with AVC teams, against Qatar in the 2016 competition (3-1, 3-0).
- Korea could win three consecutive World League matches against CEV teams for the first time since 1992-1993 (once v France, three times v Finland).

Korea

- Korea won their opening match in the 2017 World League 3-2 against Czech Republic.
- Including their last three matches last year, Korea have now won four in a row. They have equalled their longest winning streak ever in the World League (4 in 1992-1993).
- They can win their first two matches in a single edition for the third time (in 19 participations) after 1993 and 2013.
- Jiseok Jung scored 19 points against Czech Republic, a team-high.

Slovenia

- Slovenia started their campaign with a victory (3-1 against Finland), like last year, when they made their debut.
- Last year, they won their first five matches before losing against Greece (3-1).
- They have now played a total of nine World League matches (W8-L1), losing the first set on only two occasions.
- Tine Urnaut scored 18 points for Slovenia against Finland, most of the team. Last season he scored 82 points, second-most behind Mitja Gasparini (113), who scored 10 points against Finland.



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Pool B2: Japan - Portugal (03 June)

Head-to-Head

- These teams have met 10 times in the World League, with Japan winning six times and Portugal four times.
- Their last two meetings took place in 2013, when Portugal won their first encounter 3-1 on 29 June but Japan came back with a 3-2 victory a day later on 30 June.
- Their first ever encounter came in the Olympic Qualification Tournament in July 2000 in Portugal, with Japan winning in straight sets. Both teams failed to qualify for the 2000 Olympic Games.

Japan

- Japan lost their opener against Slovakia on Friday: 3-0. In 2015 and 2016, they had won their opening match.
- Japan's last win in the World League was a straight sets affair against Korea, eight matches ago.
- Japan will look to avoid a third consecutive 3-0 defeat. Such a streak has not occurred for Japan since June 2012.
- Masahiro Yanagida was Japan's top scorer against Slovakia with 17 points, including 16 of 21 spike attempts.

Portugal

- Despite scoring 106 points, Portugal were on the wrong end of a 3-2 result against Australia on Friday.
- Portugal have now lost four of their last five and seven of their last nine World League matches that went to five sets.
- Two Portuguese players tallied double-digit points against Australia: Alexandre Ferreira (24) and his brother Marco Ferreira (20).



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Pool B2: Slovakia - Australia (03 June)

Head-to-Head

- These teams meet for the first time in a major competition.
- Slovakia have faced AVC opponents nine times before in the World League (including Japan yesterday), winning four times and losing five times (all against China).
- Until Friday's win against Portugal, Australia lost nine World League matches in a row against European sides. This run started after a 3-1 win over Serbia in 2015.

Slovakia

- Slovakia beat Japan 3-0 on Friday to start their World League campaign.
- This was the team's 10th World League victory (compared to 16 defeats) and along the way they surpassed the mark of 50 sets won (now 51).
- Slovakia could now win back-to-back World League matches for the third time, after doing so in 2014 and 2016.
- Milan Bencz (18) and Matej Patak (15) were the team's top scorers against Japan. Patak registered a 100% scoring rate in blocks with five points in five attempts.

Australia

- Australia prevailed in an epic battle against Portugal, claiming a 3-2 win with a 20-18 score in the fifth set. Only once in World League history, Australia tallied more points than the 113 they had on Friday. In 2014, they beat Canada 3-2 with 115 points scored.
- This is the first time Australia won any of their first two matches in any World League campaign.
- Australia could win back-to-back World League matches for only the second time, after winning four straight during the 2014 season.
- Nathan Roberts was Australia's top scorer with 29 points against Portugal. He converted 24 of 35 spike attempts (69%).



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Pool C2: China - Netherlands (03 June)

Head-to-Head

- China and Netherlands have played each other 13 times in the World League, with Netherlands winning 11 times versus 2 for China.
- These teams last met in major competition in the 2009 World League. Netherlands won three of the four meetings, but China won the most recent one in straight sets.
- In all competitions the Dutch have won 10 of their last 12 encounters with China.
- Netherlands have won 37 of their 42 World League matches against AVC opponents.

China

- China lost their opener against Turkey on Friday by a 3-2 scoreline.
- It was their first World League match going the distance since their closing fixture in the 2015 campaign, which was won by Slovakia. In 2016 they only recorded 3-0 and 3-1 results.
- China have avoided back-to-back defeats in their last seven World League encounters, winning four of those.
- Chuan Jiang was China's top scorer against Turkey, scoring 32 of his team's 105 points (30%).

Netherlands

- For the fourth consecutive time, Netherlands started a World League campaign with a win, this time in straight sets against Egypt. At the last two editions, Netherlands also won their second match.
- In their match against Egypt, Netherlands crossed the mark of 600 sets won in the World League (601 at the moment), a feat only Brazil, Italy, Russia and Cuba have achieved.
- For the first time since June 2010, Netherlands could get successive World League wins in straight sets. Back then, they registered three 3-0 wins in a row - two against Korea, one against Brazil.
- Nimir Abdel-Aziz was Netherlands's top scorer against Egypt with 18 points.



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Pool C2: Egypt - Turkey (03 June)

Head-to-Head

- These teams have met twice in a major competition.
- In last season's World League, Egypt defeated Turkey 3-1 in the pool phase.
- Their other encounter came at the 1958 European Championship, in which Egypt participated as non-European country. Turkey won 3-1.
- Turkey have won four of their five World League matches against African sides, with the only defeat coming against Egypt.

Egypt

- Egypt lost their World League opener 3-0 against Netherlands. They have not lost their opening two World League matches since 2007.
- They have now lost four World League matches in a row, their longest streak since 10 straight defeats in 2010.
- Egypt's loss against Netherlands was their 49th in the World League. They could lose their 50th here. They have won 17 in the tournament.
- Egypt have failed to win a set in both of their last two World League matches. They want to avoid losing three straight matches 3-0, a feat that has not occurred to them since 2007 (four in a row).

Turkey

- Turkey started their World League season with a 3-2 win against China in front of a home crowd on Friday.
- Turkey lost their first two five-setters in the World League (both in 2014). Since the start of the 2015 campaign, they have managed to win each of their six matches going the distance.
- For the third season in a row, Turkey have started their campaign with a win. In each of the past two seasons, they also won their second match.
- Turkey scored 110 points on Friday, joint third-most for them in a World League match. Their points record is 121 in a defeat against Mexico in 2014.

