

Beat: Sports

USA TABLE TENNIS PLAYERS on 2019 WORLD TABLE TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS IN BUDAPEST

USA TABLE TENNIS TEAM ON ITTF 2019 WTTC

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USPA NEWS - 2019 LIEBHERR ITTF Individual World Table Tennis Championships took place in the capital of Hungary — Budapest from April 21 till 28, 2019. Ninety-nine world's countries took part in this the most important and representative table tennis event of the year. Hungarian hosts in the collaboration with the ITTF provided excellent conditions for athletes to compete at.

Great interest from table tennis fans, local and, who came from all over the world to enjoy outstanding matches all way along the Championships and to support their favorite teams and players, created an unforgettable atmosphere of a table tennis festival in the competition halls and outside during all days of the Championships. That was very touchy when organizers and spectators warmly and with admiration celebrated in the Main Arena the Hungarian Worlds Gold Table Tennis Team of 1979: Istvan JONYER, Tibor KLAMPAR, Gabor GERGELY.

Each participating country could delegate 3 women players, 3 men players, and if a country had a woman or a man player ranked in first 100 ITTF's players, then it could add one additional player in the respective category. And since the USA satisfied this requirement in Women's (Lily ZHANG #55 and Yue WU #32) and Men's (Kanak JHA # 33) categories we could delegate 4 female and 4 male players from our country. In fact, 3 women and 4 men represented the USA in the competitions: Lily Zhang (CA), Yue Wu (NJ), Amy WANG (NJ), Kanak JHA (CA), Nikhil KUMAR (CA), Victor LIU (CA) and Nicholas TIO (CA). One more US woman player was present at the 2019 WTTC in Budapest — Crystal WANG (WA); she did not appear in the official roster of any Championship and did not compete, but participated in the US Team training in training halls.

Accordingly, Yue Wu and Amy Wang who are residents of New Jersey represented the US and, also, New York/ New Jersey region on the 2019 WTTC.

Amy Wang — youngest from the US female players started the Championship with competing in a Preliminary Group 35 and met there with ALAM Mounita (BAN) — 4:0 and PASKAUKIENE Ruta (LTU), who since 1994 won several medals in singles and doubles events on European Table Tennis Championships —4:0 and by that secured 1 place in her group and advanced to the Round of 128 knock-out stage in the main draw of the Woman's Singles Championship. There, the draw matched her with one of leading woman table tennis players — FENG Tianwei (SGP) #9. Amy was able to win two games, even though lost the match — 2:4.

Amy's older and more experienced teammate Yue WU started her competition in Woman's Singles Championship from the Main Draw stage of Round of 128 in which she overcame MALANINA Maria (RUS) — 4:1 and advanced to the next stage — Round of 64, where she beat CIOBANU Irina (ROU) in an intense match. In the next round, the draw matched Yue with world # 13 (seeded under #12) SATO Hitomi (JPN). In a quite even match SATO, nevertheless, took all 4 first games and, therefore, the match — 4:0.

WU Yue, also, took part in Doubles matches — with Zhang Lily starting from the Round of 64 in Women's Doubles against BILENKO Tetiana/GAPONOVA Ganna (UKR); our pair won the match — 4:1. In the next Round of 32, the pair team played against HELMY Yousra and MESHREF Dina (EGY) and lost the match — 2:4. And in a pair with Kanak JHA Yue WU competed in Mixed Doubled Championship in Round of 64 against PARTYKA Natalia and DYJAS Jakub (POL) — 4:2 and then in Round of 32 against PERGEL Szandra and SZUDI Adam (HUN) — 0:4.

In Mixed Doubles Championship Lily Zhang paired with Nikhil KUMAR in the Preliminary Round 1 met number 1 seeds DING Ning and FAN Zhendong from CHINA — 0:3.

In Men's Singles Championship, Kanak Jha after the victory over BOBOCIA Mihai (ITA) in the Round of 128, met with #11 seed, but, in fact, now 3-time consecutive Men's Singles World Champion, legendary MA Long of CHINA. The Dragon, as journalists and some players call him, met some serious resistance from this young American player, who was able to bit him in first game — 11:8. Although, in the following four games MA changed tactics, leveled the game and had led it to the victory — 4:1. Nevertheless, Kanak JHA made a very solid statement about his table tennis abilities. A successful performance there demonstrated, also, Victor LIU, who in his Group 40 bit ALI Kanate (CIV) — 4:0 and TORIOLA Segun, Nigerian Olympian and one of the top African players since 1995 — 4:1. And, only, in the Main Draw Round of 128, he lost to a Japanese player MORIZONO Masataka — 0:4.

In Men's Doubles Championship Kanak JHA and Victor LIU had a BYE in the Preliminary Round 1 and met CATHCART Owen (IRL) and HAUG Borgar (NOR) in the Preliminary Round 2 — 3:0. This victory advanced them into the Main Draw and they played against EL-BEIALI Mohamed and SALEH Ahmed (EGY) in the Round of 64. The dramatic match with raises and falls ended in favor of Egyptian athletes — 4:3.

Nicholas TIO and Nikhil KUMAR in the Preliminary Round 1 met CAMPOS Jorge and PEREIRA Andy (CUB) — 3:2 and HAM

You Song/RI Kwang Myong (PRK) — 0:3 in Preliminary Round 2.

Apparently, the performance US Table Tennis athletes have been successful — five of our table tennis players reached and advanced through the Main Draw and two of our New York/ New Jersey Region representatives — Yue WU and Amy Wang are among them! Congratulations!

A very important event crowned US participation in 2019 WTTC in Budapest— the US sport authority delegation in the account of the USOC's Director of International Strategies and Development — Dragomir Cioroslan, Chair Person of USATT Board of Directors — Anne Cribbs, CEO of Houston Sports Authority — Janis Burke and Lily Zhang — US Table Tennis Olympian, who presented the US bid for hosting 2021 World Table Tennis Championships, won the bid and the USA was awarded the rights of conducting the 2021 WTTC in Houston, Texas! Congratulations!

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Editorial program service of General News Agency:

United Press Association, Inc.
3651 Lindell Road, Suite D168
Las Vegas, NV 89103, USA
(702) 943.0321 Local
(702) 943.0233 Facsimile
info@unitedpressassociation.org
info@gna24.com
www.gna24.com