

Minsk 2019 2nd European Games

Sunday 23rd June – Quotes of the Day

by Milica Nikolic ETTU Press Officer

10.00 am: Mixed Doubles – Round One

Patrick Franziska / Petrissa Solja (Germany) beat Mattias Falck / Matilda Ekholm (Sweden) 14-12, 7-11, 11-7, 12-10

"They are one of the most dangerous mixed doubles here. Mattias Falck came here in splendid shape and we had to fight for each point. The crucial moment was in the third game. Only after that moment did we manage to control over the match." Patrick Franziska

"After 2-1 in games, mentally we were stronger. It was easier to play after that stage." Petrissa Solja

10.00 am: Mixed Doubles – Round One

Alvaro Robles / Galia Dvorak (Spain) beat Aleksandar Karakasevic / Izabela Lupulesku (Serbia) 11-4, 7-11, 8-11, 11-7, 6-11

"We needed to stay focused throughout the whole match. Karakasevic is a very dangerous player, especially in the doubles. We could not give him the chance. Galia and I played together first time in 2017 and immediately we reached the quarter-finals of the World Championships; since then we had a lot of ups and downs." Alvaro Robles

"Here are the top 16 pairs in Europe so we are all nervous. It takes a lot of energy to play in doubles, it does not always work; today we played in harmony." Galia Dvorak

10.45 am: Mixed Doubles – Round One

Pavel Platonov / Nadezhda Bogdanova (Belarus) beat Adam Szudi / Szandra Pergel (Hungary) 11-8, 11-8, 11-6

"Yesterday I was very worried but today the support of the audience helped me. Before the match, our coach told me not to hurry, to keep the ball on the table. Pavel finished the point, showed initiative, I helped him. We did not expect any particular result; I was ready to fight for each ball." Nadezhda Bogdanova

"I think we had a good match against strong opponents, we played correctly tactically. Nadezhda played very well. After the defeat in the singles, it was hard for me to mentally tune in to today's match. I felt dissatisfaction from the unsuccessful match. Today, I tried not to think about defeat anymore and concentrate on each ball." Pavel Platonov

10.45 am: Mixed Doubles – Round One

Ovidiu Ionescu / Bernadette Szocs (Romania) beat Cédric Nuytinck / Lisa Lung (Belgium) 12-10, 9-11, 11-4, 9-11)

"It was hard for me to play after yesterday's defeat in the singles; we came here for gold, I pulled myself together." Ovidiu Ionescu

"Our goal is to clinch gold and direct pass to the Olympic Games. We have played together for a long time, we are good friends and we know what it takes to win." Bernadette Szocs

10.45 am: Mixed Doubles – Round One

Alexander Shibaev / Polina Mikhailova (Russia) beat Stefan Fegerl / Sofia Polcanova (Austria) 6-11, 12-10, 11-6, 11-3

"We struggled at the beginning, started little bit with the wrong tactics but we adjusted our game and succeeded." Alexander Shibaev

"I am defender, so I had to make sure to block and to prevent them from attacking against Alexander. I had to push the ball deep, otherwise we both were in trouble." Polina Mikhailova

1.00 pm Women's Singles – Round Three

Yang Xiaoxin (Monaco) beat Margaryta Pesotska (Ukraine) 11-5, 2-11, 9-11, 9-11, 5-11

"I am very happy for this win. I was worried before the match because I lost a close encounter in seven games last time we played against each other in Qatar. Once again, here we had a lot of rallies, it was a long and difficult match." Yang Xiaoxin.

1.00 pm Women's Singles – Round Three

Georgina Pota (Hungary) beat Nadezhda Bogdanova (Belarus) 11-9, 11-6, 11-6, 11-5

"I had been warned. Almost everyone told me how good is Bogdanova. She is very young but already very dangerous. Well, she succeeded in the mixed doubles. I was aware of what to expect. I put a lot of variations into the game, I had to change the rhythm of the play and the spin on the ball." Georgina Pota.

1.00 pm Women's Singles – Round Three

Li Qian (Poland) beat Yana Noskova (Russia) 11-9, 11-8, 12-10, 11-9

"I always need a time to build my confidence. I have lost so many matches in the opening rounds; that makes this victory more important. Yana is very dangerous; the spin she imparts

on the ball is not great but she attacks at lightning speed. I had to be on alert all the time.” Li Qian.

2.00 pm Women’s Singles – Round Three

Ni Xialian (Luxembourg) beat Amelie Solja (Austria) 11-1, 11-13, 11-1, 11-6, 11-4

“I thought the European Games in Baku would be the last one but Luxembourg still needs me. I am here again and I am so happy for this win. It was not easy to play against Solja, she is a player with the special style and she played very well today. I had to pay attention and study her game. My game was very good today, so I was very confident.” Ni Xialian.

2.00 pm Women’s Singles – Round Three

Bernadette Szocs (Romania) beat Laura Gasnier (France) 11-6, 13-11, 11-7, 11-3)

“I was well prepared this time. I did not want to see a repetition of the second round of the European Championships in Alicante when it was 3-2 and 11-8 in last game. We played so many matches as juniors and cadets so I know how dangerous is she. I changed my rhythm of play constantly because she is kind of player who adjusts to any style very quickly.” Bernadette Szocs.

2.00 pm Women’s Singles – Round Three

Linda Bergström (Sweden) beat Barbora Balazova (Slovakia) 13-11, 11-9, 11-8, 13-11

“Barbora is the kind of player who is very dangerous if you let her stay at one position. I had to play wide, use the whole table, play to the corners, play to the middle and make her move a lot. I studied her match yesterday. She is very good with service and first ball, so my receive had to be very good.” Linda Bergström

2.00 pm Women’s Singles – Round Three

Gana Gaponova (Ukraine) beat Britt Eerland (Netherlands) 10-12, 11-3, 11-4, 11-7, 11-8

“When I saw the draw I realised I have a good chance in the opening two rounds. I knew I had to be focused and to play each point strongly. Even the slightest lack of focus could have cost me a lot. The results do not show how close was the match.” Ganna Gaponova

3.00 pm Women’s Singles – Round Three

Viktoria Pavlovich (Belarus) beat Elizabeta Samara (Romania) 9-11, 11-7, 11-9, 5-11, 11-6, 10-12, 13-11

"Samara was the favorite in this match, I told to myself that I had nothing to lose, I just have to try to win. After two games down, I saw that that I needed to get closer to the table, because she has such a good top spins with heavy rotation. Of course, I needed to be more aggressive with my attacks. In the sixth game I had a chance to finish the match in my favour, I had three match points. We played such a high level of table tennis, luck smiled on me."
Victoria Pavlovich.

Viktorija Pavlovich now meets Monaco's Yang Xiaoxin in round four.

"I had never played against her. I have watched her matches; she plays well against defensive players. I will fight." Viktorija Pavlovich

3.00 pm Women's Singles – Round Three

Li Jie (Netherlands) beat Stéphanie Loeuillette (France) (12-10, 11-8, 11-8, 11-2)

"Stephanie is very good against a player with a defensive style of play. I had to change my game and I was forced to attack more. In addition, I was very nervous at the beginning. This kind of event is only once in four years, so everything has to be perfect." Li Jie.

3.00 pm Women's Singles – Round Three

Petrissa Solja (Germany) beat Ozge Yilmaz (Turkey) 11-6, 11-6, 11-5, 11-8

"She is still a junior with a very good feeling for the ball and a very good service but my win was never in question. I had to win this one. In the next round I will meet Li Qian. I beat her recently at Top 16 but it was close. I have a chance but I will have to fight hard." Petrissa Solja

3.00 pm Women's Singles – Round Three

Matilda Ekholm (Sweden) beat Natalia Partyka (Poland) 5-11, 11-7, 11-5, 6-11, 11-8, 11-8

"We played twice before against each other, I never beat her before. She is very fast and I knew if I attacked too hard or too quick she will respond even harder. From the opening game my tactics were clearer and I was more relaxed." Matilda Ekholm

4.00 pm Women's Singles – Round Three

Han Ying (Germany) beat Sarah de Nutte (Luxembourg) 11-6, 11-7, 11-9, 11-4)

"There is a lot of tension in the venue. The Olympic Games are at stake, so everyone is under pressure. Luckily, I felt good from the very start of the match. I felt confident, so it ended as as I expected." Han Ying

4.00 pm Women's Singles – Round Three

Sofia Polcanova (Austria) beat Nathalie Marchetti (Belgium) 11-4, 11-7, 11-5, 11-8

"Nathalie is the player who likes to risk, so I was on alert. I managed to make her feel uncomfortable to prevent her of creating her game." Sofia Polcanova

5.00 pm Men's Singles – Round Three

Timo Boll (Germany) beat Jakub Dyjas (Poland) 11-7, 12-14, 11-4, 11-1, 14-12

"It is not always all about me. There is another player in the arena too and this time it was very good Dyjas. He has already proved himself a very dangerous player with very sharp attacks. He played like he was on fire today, so it was not easy. I lost the second game and I was under pressure in fifth to finish the match. I could not allow him to recover and to return into the match when he started to improve his game." Timo Boll

In the fourth round Timo Boll meets Marcos Freitas.

"Marcos is very smart player who can win. He has very smart ideas and I will have to be at the top of my game to maintain control. The tables here are very slippery, the ball has more rotation. I used to be the master of rotation before I changed the tactics. I should recover something of my previous skills in order to gain some advantage." Timo Boll.

5.00 pm Men's Singles – Round Three

Marcos Freitas (Portugal) beat Lubomir Pistej (Slovakia) 8-11, 11-6, 11-8, 11-8, 11-7

"Pistej started very well. He took risks but from the second game my confidence was on a good level. I am coming back from injury after missing some tournaments in Asia. I need to play matches at top level. However, I am satisfied the way I ended the match. I have not play against Boll for a long time, but I am ready." Marcos Freitas

5.00 pm Men's Singles – Round Three

Kirill Skachkov (Russia) beat Darko Jorgic (Slovenia) 8-11, 8-11, 11-5, 11-5, 11-2, 11-13, 12-10

"Even in the moments when I was down, I felt I could win. When I approached the bench at 2-0 down, my coach just confirmed what I was feeling. I was attacking well but I made so many errors. He told me to put the ball on the table and it helped. I leveled at 2-2, before I won an amazing fifth game 11-2. I let Jrgic recover in the sixth game; at the end in the decisive game it was luck and support from the stands that made the difference. My family and friends are here and I thank them for helping me to win by that narrow margin." Kirill Skachkov

5.00 pm Men's Singles – Round Three

Tomislav Pucar (Croatia) beat Yevhen Pryshchepa (Ukraine) 11-3, 11-8, 13-1, 6-11, 11-9

"We played two times before and it was always close. Now it was much easier. It is my fault that I lost fourth game; I think I lost my focus." Tomislav Pucar

6.00 pm Men's Singles – Round Three

Panagiotis Gionis (Greece) beat Liam Pitchford (England) 11-6, 11-9, 12-10, 6-11, 12-10

"It was much better than I expected. I had an advantage of already playing yesterday in this hall. Also, our games were much different than before. We usually play long rallies but this time everything came to the small points. I was very focused, avoided unnecessary mistakes. I was under pressure after the fourth game. I felt he could recover and I could not allow that. I think it would have been a completely different match if I let him come back." Panagiotis Gionis.

In round four Panagiotis Gionis meets Tomislav Pucar

"He has improved a lot; now we are in top 16 and there are no easy adversaries." Panagiotis Gionis

6.00 pm Men's Singles – Round Three

Vladimir Samsonov (Belarus) beat Niagol Stoyanov (Italy) 11-8, 14-16, 12-14, 10-12, 11-9, 11-2, 11-9)

"Stoyanov is a very difficult adversary for me. He plays with an aggressive style; I do not feel safe playing against such a style. Despite the fact that I lost three games, I still had a chance to win. I was not going to give up. At some point I was a little unlucky but with at 10-9 in the seventh game, I made a very good return and won. Usually, when you go through such a hard match to start, it becomes easier to play, more relaxed. There is not the nervousness that exists at the beginning of the first game. Now I have a feeling that I have already won the second edition of the European Games, although I know that the medals are still very far away." Vladimir Samsonov

In round four Vladimir Samsonov meets Kirill Skachkov

"Kirill knows me well, besides, before the European Games we held a training camp. Now I will recover and tune into the next game. I had a tough match and I thank everyone for support." Vladimir Samsonov

6.00 pm Men's Singles – Round Three

Emmanuel Lebesson (France) beat Anders Lind (Denmark) 11-8, 14-16, 12-14, 10-12, 11-9, 11-2, 11-9)

"Lind played yesterday already, so he felt the venue better but it did not change a course of the play, because I feel really good. In past few weeks I had very good matches against

European players at the Asian tournaments. I had to be cautious with his service game. He is dangerous on the first ball.” Emmanuel Lebossion

6.00 pm Men’s Singles – Round Three

Kristian Karlsson (Sweden) beat Robert Gardos (Austria) 9-11, 11-8, 8-11, 11-9, 11-7, 11-9

“My first match in this tournament, I am happy. Of course there are some things that I need to work on for the next round. However, I am pretty sure it will be better. I was very nervous. I think a lot of players here are under pressure; this is a very different tournament.” Kristian Karlsson

7.00 pm Men’s Singles – Round Three

Dimitrij Ovtcharov (Germany) beat Ioannis Sgouropoulos (Greece) 11-5, 11-3, 11-9, 11-3

“I had good focus from the beginning and managed to avoid easy mistakes. Eventually, that brought me a relatively easy win. I do not think about my next adversary. I will take it as it comes; it makes no great difference because I am very confident. The biggest obstacle here is the pressure; everyone is after the ticket for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.” Dimitrij Ovtcharov

7.00 pm Men’s Singles – Round Three

Bojan Tokic (Slovenia) beat Daniel Habesohn (Austria) 11-13, 9-11, 3-11, 6-11

“I feel good here and I did not lose that feeling in this match. I hope I will stay in tournament after tomorrow.” Bojan Tokic

In round four Bojan Tokic meets Wang Yang who beat Portugal’s Tiago Apolonia (11-9, 7-11, 11-7, 11-6, 11-8)

“Last time I beat Wang at the European Championships 2017.” Bojan Tokic

7.00 pm Men’s Singles – Round Three

Jonathan Groth (Denmark) beat Sam WALKER (Great Britain) 11-4, 4-11, 7-11, 11-5, 8-11, 14-12, 11-7)

“In the opening game I played really well. The trouble started in the next one. Samsonov was playing at that moment and the crowd was very loud. I should not allow these things to distract me so much but it happened. Sam took control of the match. In the sixth game I was already out but a mistake from the umpire and Walker lost focus. I feel sorry for him but I seized my opportunity.” Jonathan Groth

8.00 pm Men's Singles – Round Three

Aleksandar Shibaev beat Mattias Falck (11-9, 11-9, 11-7, 11-8)

"I was calm and focused from the beginning. I pushed Falck to the limit throughout the whole match. I kept him under pressure, forced him to play from uncomfortable positions, kept him on the wrong foot." Aleksandar Shibaev

"It is sport. Shibaev was the better player this time. Hope next time it will be better for me; it can hardly get any worse than this." Mattias Falck

8.00 pm Men's Singles – Round Three

Andrej Gacina (Croatia) beat Simon Gauzy (France) 9-11, 11-6, 11-9, 8-11, 9-11, 11-5, 12-10)

"It was so close; Gauzy is a very clever player. He changed the rhythm constantly; I was forced to adjust my game throughout the whole match. My weak points were receiving service, but in the rallies I was better. At the end I was brave at 6-10 down in the seventh, took control and won." Andrej Gacina