



17 February 2024

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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## **Singapore valiant in defeat as Slovenia's strength prevail at World Team Table Tennis Championships**

Singapore's male paddlers, buoyed by their victory over Brazil yesterday, fought hard and gave it their all but despite their efforts, they could not find their way past 12<sup>th</sup> ranked Slovenia in their second match of the ITTF World Team Table Tennis Championships 2024 in Busan, Korea on Saturday.

Singapore, 22<sup>nd</sup> in the world, are now level on points with Brazil and Canada with 3 points each, with a win and a loss in Group 7.

Izaak Quek, 17, up against a familiar foe in Darko Jorgic, was looking to make amends for his defeat at the WTT Star Contender Goa three weeks ago. However, the world number 15 once again had Izaak's number as the Singaporean lost 11-13, 11-8, 13-15, 7-11 in the first singles to the Slovenian.

Koen Pang, 21, levelled things up for Singapore in the second singles when he beat Deni Kozul in straight sets, 15-13, 11-6, 11-7.

Slovenia then took a 2-1 lead when Clarence Chew, 28, could not find a way past Peter Hribar, falling to a 12-14, 9-11, 11-6, 6-11 defeat.

With Singapore staring at defeat, it was left to Pang to try and force a deciding set when he faced off against Jorgic in the first of the reverse singles. However, the Slovenian once again showed why he is ranked among the world's elite players as Pang lost 7-11, 9-11, 11-7, 9-11.

Gao Ning, National Men's Head Coach, said, "Slovenia is a strong team and we did our best today. There is definitely room for improvement, especially from a technical point of view. The areas where we will need to improve include taking the opportunities and chances that come our way, and how we change up our serves and how we receive serves, I think these are areas where we can improve on.

Quek said, "Going into the game today, we knew it was going to be a tough match, considering that Jorgic is among the best in the world, and their other players are good as well, but we tried our best today and we definitely have a lot more to learn from them."

Singapore will take on Malaysia tomorrow at 4pm Singapore time, in what should be an exciting Causeway Derby as they look to bounce back from this defeat.

“We have played against them many times, we know their playing styles and they know ours as well, so each time we play against them it always ends up as a close game, so we will prepare as best as we can and get ready for tomorrow”, added Quek.

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