

# TT innovates and activates with style

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An innovative variation of table tennis returns on Tuesday 30th November and Wednesday 1st December 2010. The Spectacular Pairs competition will be part of the programme for the Volkswagen Cup in the German city of Braunschweig. First tried at the Volkswagen Cup in China earlier this year, it proved to be a great success.

Interspersed between the main event, the format is simple; two players have three minutes to provide the most spectacular rally possible, judged – in true Strictly Come Dancing style – by a panel of experts who each provide a score out of ten.

## The Goal

“Our goal is to present to the audience a fun and spectacular event that incorporates many of the attractive features of our sport”, said Adham Sharara, ITTF President. “This is especially suited for the flamboyant and spectacular styles of play; if this event continues to succeed and gain in popularity, we may initiate a circuit of events in the future.”

In Braunschweig, the spectacular pairs will be contested by five extravagant pairings including two Swedish legends, Jan-Ove Waldner and Mikael Appelgren plus, the winners last time around, brothers, Jean Michel and Philippe Saive.

## Increasing Numbers of Spectators and Growing Sponsorship Appeal

It is clear that the International Table Tennis Federation is making great strides at increasing the spectator and subsequently sponsorship appeal of this truly worldwide sport. This was underlined by the significant increase in online viewing at the World Championships this year resulting in 1.1 million connections to the live streaming, from no fewer than 124 different countries.

## Successful Partnership with Volkswagen

“Table Tennis is a sport that is played and viewed worldwide but of course we know its special appeal in Asia and especially in China”, continued Adham Sharara. “For this reason Volkswagen has made a wise choice to partner with the ITTF and promote its brand in these areas.”

It is a move that has proved fruitful.

“So far this long lasting partnership has been very successful for both sides”, he continued. “Suffice it to say that Volkswagen was no.2 in China prior to its involvement with table tennis, but has maintained the No.1 position in terms of volume of sales of cars since its partnership with us.”



## Significant Competition

Adham Sharara was also keen to point out the significance of the Volkswagen Cup. “The Volkswagen Cup is an event that presents the cream of the crop, but the most interesting feature is that fact that we have only one player per country”, he added.

“This makes for a very exciting and dramatic event as each player is fighting individually without the usual support of other players from the same country in the tournament. Of course we have the best players in the World, and each wants to win, so it’s very exciting.”

## Impressive Prize Fund

The Volkswagen Cup boasts an impressive \$250,000 prize fund with the winners also driving away with a brand new car courtesy of the sponsors, Volkswagen.

**Men** **World Ranking**

BOLL Timo – GER	2
MA Lin – CHN	4
SAMSONOV Vladimir – BLR	7
JOO Se Hyuk – KOR	9
MIZUTANI Jun – JPN	10
CHUANG Chih-Yuan – TPE	16
GAO Ning – SIN	17
TANG Peng – HKG	18

**WOMEN** **World Ranking**

FENG Tianwei – SIN	2
KIM Kyung Ah – KOR	4
LI Xiaoxia – CHN	6
FUKUHARA Ai – JPN	9
JIANG Huajun – HKG	11
WU Jiaduo – GER	12
SHEN Yanfei – ESP	15
TOTH Krisztina – HUN	19

**Spectacular Pairs**

SAIVE Philippe – BEL	SAIVE Jean Michel – BEL
TOTH Krisztina – HUN	STRBIKOVA Renata – CZE
WALDNER Jan-Ove – SWE	APPELGREN Mikael – SWE
GUO Yuehua – CHN	CHENG Xinhua – CHN
FETZNER Steffen – GER	WOSIK Torben – GER

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