

Ma Long to face Ma Lin

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Posted On: November 01, 2009

 Chinese Superstars Ma Long and Ma Lin will contest the Mens Singles Final in the 2009 English Open.

Top seed Ma Long always looked the more likely winner against his team-mate Xu Xin, the new Star of World Table Tennis. The previous meetings between these two players on the ITTF Pro Tour had gone the full seven sets with victories shared one apiece, but, on this occasion 20 year-old Ma Long had most of the answers. He raced into a 6-0 and 9-1 lead in the first game and was equally dominant in the second game. Xu Xin hit back strongly to take the third end but he needed to do better in the fourth end to have any chance. Both players produce long "finishing shots" on the forehand, and both players concentrated on pressurising their opponents down the backhand wing. Ma Long just did it that bit better. He won 11-3, 11-5, 9-11, 11-8, 11-3.

He will be joined in the Final by Olympic Champion , 29 year-old Ma Lin, the winner of an incredible 60 Pro Tour titles. The man with the most destructive third ball in World Table Tennis set out his tactics from the start. There was no way he had any intention of allowing the 22 year-old Seiya Kishikawa (Japan), a brilliant winner in this Tournament over Cheng Weixing (Austria) , Chen Qi (China) and Timo Boll (Germany) to trade backhands with him. Ma Lin went for the kill from the off. He was brutal and at times brilliant and ran out a convincing 11-6, 11-8, 11-8, 11-6 winner.

Image: Ma Lin, courtesy tabletennisphotos.com

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