

Ma Long wins deserved Grand Finals crown

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Top seed Ma Long captures ITTF Pro Tour Mens Singles title

Ma Long, 23, from Liaoning, China, the current World no. one and the top seed is the 2011 ITTF Pro Tour Mens' Singles Champion after beating team-mate and 2011 World Singles Champion Zhang Jike 4-1 after an all-action Mens Singles Final.

With both players trading blows a couple of yards away from the table – rarely more – clearly neither player wanted to give away too much ground Ma Long triumphed 11-5, 8-11, 11-3, 11-4, 14-12.

This is Ma Long's third Pro Tour Final's Singles title to go with his 10 Pro Tour Singles titles and his power-house play enabled him to dominate large chunks of the match. Both players are supremely strong on the backhand wing and Ma Long has an all-round power that has rarely been matched. It is hard to think of a better balanced player.



Zhang Jike had his good patches – notably the second game (which he won) in which he peppered his opponent's backhand wing and in a dramatic fifth game Zhang Jike led 7-5 only to find himself pegged back to 7-8.

Going for 'broke' at 10-8 (it is hard to hit much bigger shots than those of Ma Long) he bravely pulled back to 10-10 and he had a game point at 12-11 but it wasn't to be. Ma Long proved the steadier as the pressure reached breaking point. Ma Long deservedly took the title 14-12 and the USD 40,000.00 first prize.

Ma Long, a delighted winner said afterwards "I am very pleased to win in this arena particularly having to beat my two team-mates Wang Hao and Zhang Jike to capture this title".

Steve Kerns

& Russell Moore

Interestingly just two minutes before the match neither singles finalist was prepared for the game! Ma Long was apparently in the toilets and, as you can see below, Zhang Jike was taking a quick nap!



Contemplation for the mind of Zhang Jike...although now it's wake-up time – you're on!

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