



Pletea shock on day one in Worcester

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Posted On: September 08, 2017

Nine players remain unbeaten after day one of the Europe Youth Top 10 at Worcester Arena, but there were shock defeats for top seeds Cristian Pletea and Elena Zaharia.

Pletea – the top junior in Europe – saw eighth-ranked Bastien Rembert overcome him 4-2, while Zaharia's day was worse as she was beaten twice.

With three rounds of matches in four categories – Junior and Cadet boys and girls – there was plenty of superb play and a sprinkling of upsets, but sadly, no English wins.

Josh Bennett and Charlotte Bardsley in particular had their moments and, with both having played the top three players, will feel confident of picking up some positive results over the weekend.

Bennett was a late call-up after Tom Jarvis, seeded fifth in the Junior Boys, had to withdraw through illness on the eve of the tournament.

For full schedule and results, [click here](#).

All photos by Alan Man – [click here to see more photos from day one](#)

Junior Boys

European Junior champion Ioannis Sgouropoulos appears to be in the box seat after day one, winning his three matches for the combined loss of only three games.

The identity of the other member of the 100% club is perhaps more surprising – not top seed Cristian Pletea but the sixth-ranked Belgian Florian Cnudde.

Pletea, having been relieved to defeat England's Josh Bennett earlier, succumbed 4-2 to eighth seed Bastien Rembert in his third match.



Florian Cnudde

Back at the start of the day, a match against Sgouropoulos was always going to be a tough baptism for late call-up Josh Bennett, and so it proved in a 4-0 reverse which showed the Greek in ruthless mood.

Top seed Pletea also looked good – mostly – as he started against the other Romanian player Rares Sipos, ranked No 3. The blip was in the fourth of the five games, which Sipos took 11-0, Pletea swiping his receive into the net in frustration on the final point.

Tobias Hippler, elevated to fifth seed by the withdrawal of Tom Jarvis, beat No 7 Gerrit Engemann 4-2 in the all-German clash, while in the meeting between the two French players, No 8 Bastien Rembert overturned No 4 Irvin Bertrand in six games.

No 6 beat No 9, but there was not a lot in it, Cnudde edging Matteo Mutti of Italy 4-3.

Bennett's task got no easier, taking on the top seed in round two. Early on, it looked as if the result would be similar as Pletea ran through the first two games, but Bennett squeezed out the third and then blitzed the fourth 11-4 to level it, helped by some blistering forehands and clever directional changes.

He went 8-0 down in the next but fought back to 9-7 with more of the same – one particularly clean forehand winner earning a thumbs-up from his opponent.

But that was as close as it got, Pletea keeping his nose in front from then on – his 'Cho' after the final point showed his delight at having come through a test, while Bennett could now be assured he belongs in this company.

Meanwhile, Sgouropoulos earned his second win, over Rembert, as did Cnudde, who left third seed Sipos still looking to break his duck – the score in both matches was 4-1.

Italy's Mutti edged Hippler 4-3 to get his first win, and the clash between Bertrand and Engemann was a 4-2 win for the Frenchman in a match in which every game was close.



Bastien Rembert

Rembert put the proverbial feline amongst the bird-life with his 4-2 defeat of Pletea, coming from 2-1 down after losing the third game 11-1.

Bennett again showed tremendous fight to close from 3-0 down against Sipos to 3-2, before the third seed composed himself to notch his first win.

Sgouropoulos and Cnudde had to mount mini-comebacks against German opposition to preserve their records – the former from 2-1 down to Engemann and the latter from 2-0 behind to Hippler.

The final match of the day saw the ninth seed Mutti rack up win No 2, defeating fourth seed Bertrand in six.

Results - Junior Boys



Player	CP	IS	RS	IB	TH	FC	GE	BR	MM	JB	Wins	Posn
Cristian Pletea	X		4-1					2-4		4-2	2	3=
Ioannis Sgouropoulos		X					4-2	4-1		4-0	3	1=
Rares Sipos	1-4		X			1-4				4-2	1	6=
Irvin Bertrand				X			4-2	2-4	2-4		1	6=
Tobias Hippler					X	2-4	4-2		3-4		1	6=
Florian Cnudde			4-1		4-2	X			4-3		3	1=
Gerrit Engemann		2-4		2-4	2-4		X				0	9=
Bastien Rembert	4-2	1-4		4-2				X			2	3=
Matteo Mutti				4-2	4-3	3-4			X		2	3=
Josh Bennett	2-4	0-4	2-4							X	0	9=

Junior Girls

Top seed Adina Diaconu lived up to billing with three wins from three and remains the only unbeaten athlete.

Behind her, a log-jam of five players have two wins, including sixth and seventh seeds Zhang Xuan and Luisa Saeger. The former picked up a notable win by defeating third seed Izabela Lupulesku.

The day started with defeat for the second seed Andreea Dragoman – and was there something in the air around Table 3? Following defeats for the top seed in the Cadet Girls and No 2 in the Cadet Boys, Dragoman of Romania lost in six to Serbia's Lupulesku.



Zhang Xuan of Spain

Two German girls went the distance on Table 5, victory going to Saeger, battling from 3-1 down to overcome ninth seed Jennie Wolf.

No such problems for Diaconu, who blitzed her fellow Romanian, Tania Plaian, in four straight.

It was the same score for fourth-ranked Lisa Lung of Belgium against England's Denise Payet, while Spain's sixth seed Zhang overturned Anastasia Kolish of Russia, ranked one place above her, 4-1.

The top two seeds met in round two and it was No 1 who came out on top, though Diaconu found it no easy task against Dragoman, coming from 2-1 down and prevailing in a sixth game in which she came from 10-6 down.

Kolish put her first tick in the win column in a six-game match against Wolf, while Payet battled hard against third seed Lupulesku, not least in the third which went to 14-12, before losing her second match 4-0.

It was the same score for Saeger as she kept her 100% start against Plaian, while Lung needed six to record her second victory, over Zhang.

Dragoman belatedly got her first win when she defeated fellow Romanian Plaian 4-2 – the 18-16 scoreline in her favour in the fifth proving pivotal.

Also in that third round, Lung lost her first and Wolf won hers – the German prevailing 4-2.

Third seed Lupulesku suffered her first defeat, 11-8 in a decider against Zhang, Payet could not get enough of a foothold to ruffle Diaconu, who won it 4-0, and Kolish was impressive in beating Saeger by the same margin.

Results - Junior Girls



Player	ADi	ADr	IL	LL	AK	ZX	LS	TP	JW	DP	Wins	Posn
Adina Diaconu	X	4-2						4-0		4-0	3	1
Andreea Dragoman	2-4	X	2-4					4-2			1	7=
Izabela Lupulesku		4-2	X			3-4				4-0	2	2=
Lisa Lung				X		4-2			2-4	4-0	2	2=
Anastasia Kolish					X	1-4	4-0		4-2		2	2=
Zhang Xuan			4-3	2-4	4-1	X					2	2=
Luisa Saeger					0-4		X	4-0	4-3		2	2=
Tania Plaian	0-4	2-4					0-4	X			0	9=
Jennie Wolf				4-2	2-4		3-4		X		1	7=
Denise Payet	0-4		0-4	0-4						X	0	9=

Cadet Boys

First, third and fifth seeds were unbeaten at the end of the day, Hungary's Csaba Andras the most impressive, the third seed dropping only one game.

Bilal Hamache of France (No 1) and Samuel Kulczycki were the others to boast unblemished records.

Ethan Walsh took two sets off fifth-ranked Kulczycki of Poland as he got his campaign off to a confident start, taking the first game 13-11 and later leading 2-1 before his opponent found a way and pulled clear to win 4-2.



Samuel Kulczycki of Poland

Daniel Rinderer, ranked eight, was the big winner of round one, enjoying a 4-0 win over his fellow German and second seed Kay Stumper, though it was closer than the scoreline suggests, with 11-8 the biggest margin of any of the games.

No such alarms for top seed Hamache, who beat fellow Frenchman Jules Cavaille 4-1, or third-ranked Andras, the third seed, overcoming Dorian Zheng (GER, 4) by the same score.

Belgium's Olav Kosolosky was the other winner, also 4-1, against Martin Friis of Sweden, ranked one place below him at No 7.

Jules Cavaille came from 3-1 down and saved two match points to get his first win on the board in round two. The French ninth seed defeated Belgium's Kosolosky 14-12 in the decider.

The match involving the other two French players was an almighty battle and top seed Hamache had to come from 3-1 down to take the victory over Zheng.



England players Denise Payet, Ethan Walsh and Josh Bennett with coach Matt Stanforth

Stumper earned his first win, 4-1 over Walsh, while Kulczycki and Andras kept up their unbeaten records against, respectively, Friis and Rinderer.

Second seed Stumper, who had lost in round one, kept his medal hopes alive but only just as he saw off a determined Friis. Stumper led 3-1 but his opponent came back to level, taking the sixth by an eye-catching 11-2. He led the decider, but Stumper reeled off a string of points to take it 11-8, leaving the Swede inconsolable.

Hamache, Andras and Kulczycki all kept up their 100% records in round three, Andras at the expense of England's Walsh with a 4-0 scoreline.

Hamache conceded one game to Rinderer and Kulczycki two to Kosolosky, recovering from losing the third game 18-16 to reel off the next three.

Zheng's first win came courtesy of a remarkable turnaround against his team-mate Cavaille. The lower-ranked player led 3-0 but missed the chance to seal a 4-0 win and, once fourth seed Zheng had taken that fourth game 13-11, the wheels rather came off for Cavaille as he lost the next three 4, 4, 6.

Results - Cadet Boys



Player	BH	KS	CA	DZ	SK	OK	MF	DR	JC	EW	Wins	Posn
Bilal Hamache	X			4-3				4-1	4-1		3	1=
Kay Stumper		X					4-3	0-4		4-1	2	4
Csaba Andras			X	4-1				4-1		4-0	3	1=
Dorian Zheng	3-4		1-4	X					4-3		1	5=
Samuel Kulczycki					X	4-2	4-2			4-2	3	1=
Olav Kosolovsky					2-4	X	4-1		3-4		1	5=
Martin Friis		3-4			2-4	1-4	X				0	9=
Daniel Rinderer	1-4	4-0	1-4					X			1	5=
Jules Cavaille	1-4			3-4		4-3			X		1	5=
Ethan Walsh		1-4	0-4		2-4					X	0	9=

Cadet Girls

Three girls lead the way with 100% records – but top seed Elena Zaharia is not one of them.

Romania's Zaharia was beaten twice and will have her work cut out to rejoin the leaders, who are the second, third and fourth seeds Jamila Laurenti, Camille Lutz and Sophia Klee.

England's Charlotte Bardsley acquitted herself well against the top three seeds but was unable to notch a win.

Listen: Charlotte Bardsley's day one verdict

<https://newsarchive.tabletennisengland.co.uk/content/uploads/2017/09/Charlotte.m4a>

Bardsley's campaign got off to a controversial start as she lost 4-2 to second seed Laurenti of Italy.

Having fought back from 3-0 down – saving five match points in the fourth game – Bardsley appeared to be denied an edge ball when match point down at 9-10 in the sixth.

Despite protests from coach Marcus Gustafson, the decision stood, giving Laurenti the decisive game by an 11-9 margin.



Coach Marcus Gustafson with Charlotte Bardsley

Also in round one, Anastasia Bondareva staged a monumental comeback against fellow German Wenna Tu to get the event off to a thrilling start.

Sixth-ranked Tu was 3-0 up but saw her compatriot fight back to win it in a decider, taking the fourth 16-14 and then saving two more match points at 10-8 down in the seventh before eventually taking it 14-12.

There was also a decider when Germany's Klee, seeded four, took on Ozge Yilmaz of Turkey, the seventh seed. It was Klee who took it 11-5 having come from 3-2 down in games.

Top seed Zaharia was surprised by Isa Cok of France in her first match, taking the first game but then seeing her opponent take the next four.

First match of the event to finish was third seed Lutz of France, who saw off compatriot and 10th seed Lou Frete in five.

Zaharia got her campaign off the ground against Bardsley in round two, though the English girl took the first game and had her moments.



Germany's Sophia Klee

Tu also notched her first win, overcoming Frete 4-1, while Laurenti and Klee got their second victories, as did Lutz, who shook off her French colleague Cok 4-3 – three times being pegged back after going a game in front.

Round three saw Yilmaz off the mark and it was an impressive 4-2 win over Zaharia, leaving the top seed with only one win from three today and with a lot to do to get back into the hunt for medals.

The longest match of the day saw Laurenti sneak past Bondareva 14-12 in the seventh, while Lutz picked up her third win at the expense of Bardsley, who again took the first game and will surely have chances to win matches later in the tournament, having had to face the top three seeds today.

There was a second win for Cok, 4-2 against Frete and a third for Klee, over Tu by the same margin.

Results - Cadet Girls



Player	EZ	JL	CL	SK	IC	WT	OY	AB	CB	LF	Wins	Posn
Elena Zaharia	X				1-4		2-4		4-1		1	5=
Jamila Laurenti		X					4-2	4-3	4-2		3	1=
Camille Lutz			X		4-3				4-1	4-1	3	1=
Sophia Klee				X		4-2	4-3	4-1			3	1=
Isa Cok	4-1		3-4		X					4-2	2	4
Wenna Tu				2-4		X		3-4		4-1	1	5=
Ozge Yilmaz	4-2	2-4		3-4			X				1	5=
Anastasia Bondareva		3-4		1-4		4-3		X			1	5=
Charlotte Bardsley	1-4	2-4	1-4						X		0	9=
Lou Frete			1-4		2-4	1-4				X	0	9=

Today's full results

Cadet Girls

Round 1

Camille Lutz (FRA) bt Lou Frete (FRA) 4-1 (11-7, 8-11, 11-8, 11-8, 11-9)

Isa Cok (FRA) bt Elena Zaharia (ROU) 4-1 (9-11, 11-7, 11-7, 11-8, 14-12)

Jamila Laurenti (ITA) bt Charlotte Bardsley (ENG) 4-2 (11-9, 11-6, 11-9, 13-15, 9-11, 11-9)

Sophia Klee (GER) bt Ozge Yilmaz (TUR) 4-3 (12-14, 6-11, 11-6, 11-6, 8-11, 11-1, 11-5)

Anastasia Bondareva (GER) bt Wenna Tu (GER) 4-3 (7-11, 9-11, 7-11, 16-14, 11-5, 11-9, 14-12)

Round 2

Laurenti bt Yilmaz 4-2 (11-9, 11-13, 8-11, 11-3, 11-5, 11-7)

Tu bt Frete 4-1 (11-4, 11-8, 11-2, 10-12, 12-10)

Klee bt Bondareva 4-1 (11-7, 11-7, 11-6, 8-11, 11-5)

Lutz bt Cok 4-3 (11-9, 9-11, 11-7, 6-11, 11-5, 4-11, 11-6)

Zaharia bt Bardsley 4-1 (7-11, 11-6, 11-7, 11-4, 11-6)

Round 3

Klee bt Tu 4-2 (12-10, 11-8, 12-14, 7-11, 11-8, 11-5)

Lutz bt Bardsley 4-1 (8-11, 11-5, 11-6, 11-8, 11-5)

Yilmaz bt Zaharia 4-2 (11-6, 12-10, 9-11, 9-11, 11-8, 11-9)

Cok bt Frete 4-2 (11-6, 11-9, 9-11, 11-8, 8-11, 11-5)

Laurenti bt Bondareva 4-3 (11-6, 9-11, 9-11, 13-11, 10-12, 11-9, 14-12)

Cadet Boys

Round 1

Bilal Hamache (FRA) bt Jules Cavaille (FRA) 4-1 (11-7, 11-5, 6-11, 11-4, 11-7)

Csaba Andras (HUN) bt Dorian Zheng (FRA) 4-1 (11-2, 4-11, 11-5, 11-5, 11-9)

Daniel Rinderer (GER) bt Kay Stumper (GER) 4-0 (12-10, 11-8, 13-11, 11-9)

Samuel Kulczycki (POL) bt Ethan Walsh (ENG) 4-2 (11-13, 11-6, 9-11, 11-3, 11-9, 11-4)

Olav Kosolosky (BEL) bt Martin Friis (SWE) 4-1 (11-7, 11-4, 6-11, 14-12, 12-10)

Round 2

Stumper bt Walsh 4-1 (11-4, 11-9, 11-3, 9-11, 11-6)
Cavaille bt Kosolosky 4-3 (11-9, 7-11, 11-9, 11-6, 7-11, 3-11, 12-14)
Kulczycki bt Friis 4-2 (11-8, 7-11, 13-11, 11-4, 8-11, 11-4)
Hamache bt Zheng 4-3 (8-11, 9-11, 11-4, 4-11, 11-8, 11-9, 11-6)
Andras bt Rinderer 4-1 (11-8, 11-3, 6-11, 11-9, 11-9)

Round 3

Zheng bt Cavaille 4-3 (10-12, 7-11, 7-11, 13-11, 11-4, 11-4, 11-6)
Hamache bt Rinderer 4-1 (9-11, 15-13, 12-10, 11-7, 11-5)
Andras bt Walsh 4-0 (11-5, 11-7, 11-7, 11-8)
Kulczycki bt Kosolosky 4-2 (9-11, 11-5, 16-18, 11-6, 11-7, 11-9)
Stumper bt Friis 4-3 (13-11, 11-6, 8-11, 11-5, 11-13, 2-11, 11-8)

Junior Girls

Round 1

Adina Diaconu (ROU) bt Tania Plaian (ROU) 4-0 (11-3, 11-7, 11-8, 11-4)
Izabela Lupulesku (SRB) bt Andreea Dragoman (ROU) 4-2 (11-3, 11-7, 14-12, 9-11, 6-11, 11-4)
Lisa Lung (BEL) bt Denise Payet (ENG) 4-0 (11-6, 11-9, 11-8, 11-6)
Zhang Xuan (ESP) bt Anastasia Kolish (RUS) 4-1 (12-10, 13-11, 5-11, 12-10, 11-8)
Luisa Saeger (GER) bt Jennie Wolf (GER) 4-3 (7-11, 9-11, 11-7, 8-11, 11-8, 11-9)

Round 2

Lung bt Zhang 4-2 (8-11, 11-3, 8-11, 11-8, 11-8, 11-4)
Saeger bt Plaian 4-0 (11-7, 11-3, 11-5, 11-5)
Kolish bt Wolf 4-2 (12-10, 11-8, 8-11, 10-12, 11-4, 11-9)
Diaconu bt Dragoman 4-2 (6-11, 11-4, 5-11, 13-11, 11-9, 12-10)
Lupulesku bt Payet 4-0 (11-7, 11-6, 14-12, 11-8)

Round 3

Diaconu bt Payet 4-0 (11-5, 11-9, 11-8, 11-3)
Kolish bt Saeger 4-0 (11-7, 11-5, 12-10, 11-9)
Zhang bt Lupulesku 4-3 (6-11, 12-10, 7-11, 11-6, 11-9, 9-11, 11-8)
Dragoman bt Plaian 4-2 (13-11, 10-12, 9-11, 11-7, 18-16, 11-6)
Wolf bt Lung 4-2 (11-6, 11-8, 3-11, 11-6, 11-13, 11-8)

Junior Boys

Round 1

Crisian Pletea (ROU) bt Rares Sipos (ROU) 4-1 (11-4, 11-6, 11-7, 0-11, 11-9)
F Cnudde (BEL) bt Matteo Mutti (ITA) 4-3 (11-8, 11-1, 11-13, 14-12, 8-11, 7-11, 11-5)
Ioannis Sgouropoulos (GRE) bt Josh Bennett (ENG) 4-0 (11-2, 11-2, 11-3, 11-8)
Bastien Rembert (FRA) bt Irvin Bertrand (FRA) 4-2 (11-3, 8-11, 11-4, 8-11, 11-9, 11-9)
Tobias Hippler (GER) bt Gerrit Engemann (GER) 4-2 (9-11, 11-9, 11-2, 4-11, 11-7, 11-9)

Round 2

Bertrand bt Engemann 4-2 (12-10, 11-13, 11-9, 10-12, 11-9, 11-7)
Mutti bt Hippler 4-3 (5-11, 11-9, 11-8, 9-11, 10-12, 11-5, 11-5)
Cnudde bt Sipos 4-1 (11-7, 11-7, 11-5, 7-11, 11-9)
Pletea bt Bennett 4-2 (11-2, 11-4, 11-13, 4-11, 11-7, 11-7)
Sgouropoulos bt Rembert 4-1 (11-8, 4-11, 11-6, 11-9, 11-7)

Round 3

Cnudde bt Hippler 4-2 (7-11, 7-11, 11-7, 11-8, 11-9, 11-6)
Sgouropoulos bt Engemann 4-2 (11-13, 15-13, 8-11, 11-7, 11-5)
Rembert bt Pletea 4-2 (12-10, 7-11, 1-11, 11-8, 11-6, 11-6)
Sipos bt Bennett 4-2 (12-10, 11-3, 11-3, 4-11, 4-11, 11-7)
Mutti bt Bertrand 4-2 (11-8, 15-13, 6-11, 6-11, 14-12, 11-7)

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