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## First World Cup of 2018 is in Antalya

Lausanne, April 20th.

From 23 – 29 April, the Bosphorus hotel in Antalya, Turkey will provide the venue for the first World Cup tournament of 2018. It will be the 22nd World Cup in Turkey since 1993.



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Fourteen players

have been invited by the UMB according to the world ranking list: Caudron, Merckx, Jaspers, Zanetti, H.J. Kim, Blomdahl, Sanchez, Sidhom, Coklu, Nguyen, J.H. Heo, S.W. Choi, Bury and Polychronopoulos.

Wildcards were given to Patino and Sayginer, Tasdemir (local).

Is this a good moment to look back at the Turkish World Cup history?

1993 – Istanbul. Sayginer is the rising star, and he does not disappoint. Semih beats Blomdahl in the 2<sup>nd</sup> round but then loses to Dielis. The late great Sang Chun Lee wins the event, beating Ceulemans in the final.



1994 – Istanbul. Again, a losing final for Ceulemans, this time against Jaspers who wins his second World Cup here. Emek, Sayginer, Pamuk and Peker all in the last 16, the Turks show they are getting stronger.

1995 – Istanbul. A third lost final for Raymond, this time Blomdahl wins in Istanbul. A young Caudron comes in third, Torbjörn has a 1-inning set and averages 2.308 for the event.

1996 – Istanbul. Blomdahl beats Carlsen in the final, Jaspers beats Ceulemans for 3d / 4<sup>th</sup> place.

1996 – Antalya. This UMB event (without the BWA players) goes to Jorge Theriaga. Eddy Leppens is runner-up, Dani Sánchez comes in third.

1997 – Antalya. The UMB and the BWA players rejoin. A very dominant Jaspers beats Blomdahl in the final. Sánchez and Efler win bronze.

1998 – Goynuk. Gerwin Valentijn may be the surprise finalist, but Sayginer wins the tournament, his second World Cup victory following Ghent 1994. Zanetti and Rudolph share third and fourth.

1999 – Kemer. Murat Coklu and Adnan Yüksel make their first appearances, but Blomdahl wins the event in a final against Sang Lee.

2001 – Kusadasi. Tasdemir, Sayginer, Peker, Özcan all in the last 16. Jaspers wins, beating Dani Sánchez in the final.

2005 – Istanbul. Blomdahl beats Caudron in the final, Tasdemir and de Bruijn are 3 and 4.



2006 – Istanbul. Eleven Turkish players in the main draw, a record at the time. Blomdahl wins against Sayginer, Horn and Tasdemir win bronze.

2007 – Manisa. Has anybody won in Turkey more often than Blomdahl? This time, he beats Sánchez in the final. Jaspers and Sayginer have to settle for third and fourth. Jaspers has a 1-inning set.

2009 – Antalya. A first World Cup victory for the very talented Martin Horn, who beats Jaspers. Caudron and Blomdahl are 3 and 4, Bury has a 1-inning set.

2010 – Antalya. Kyung Roul Kim, sadly no longer with us, wins in Antalya 2010. Jaspers second, Horn and Kasidokostas 3d / 4<sup>th</sup>.

2011 – Trabzon. Kyung Roul Kim is in the final again, but he loses it to Eddy Merckx. Blomdahl and Kasidokostas are the losing semifinalists.



2012 – Antalya. Korea and Turkey are getting stronger every year, and it shows. Sung Won Choi beats Tasdemir in the final. Caudron and Sánchez three and four.

2013 – Antalya. First World Cup in Turkey to 40 points. Blomdahl beats Bury in the final, Jaspers shines with a 2.466 general average but has to share third with Merckx.

2014 – Istanbul. Three Korean players on the podium: Jae Ho Cho beats Sung Won Choi in the final, Merckx and Kyung Roul Kim share bronze.

2015 – Istanbul. Ten years after his surprise European title, Murat Naci Coklu wins his home World Cup in a final against Roland Forthomme. Jaspers and Merckx lose their semifinals.

2016 – Bursa. Jaspers wins the tournament, Caudron is the runner-up. Merckx is third, and so is Piedrabuena, his best WC result ever.



2017 – Bursa. A

historic final in 2017, with Caudron as the star. He beats Jaspers 40-14 in only 7 innings, the shortest World Cup final ever. Dong Koong Kang and Bury share third place.

What will Antalya 2018 present us with? Most likely, lots of good Turkish hospitality, some spring sunshine and a tough qualification tournament leading up to a high class main draw. You have to bring something special, if you want to win in Turkey.

The tournament will be officially opened on Friday 27 April at 11.00.

**The tables are Zeki Bilardo**, balls are Super Aramith Pro Cup Prestige, the cloth is Simonis 300 Prestige Blue. First prize is 16.000 euro, there is 10.000 euro for the runner-up and 6.000 for the winners of the bronze.