

# **WFDF**



Press & Social Media Release  
17<sup>th</sup> August 2017

 @wdf.wtdgc

 2017wtdgc.uk



# USA v GBR on Opening Day Clash at WTDGC

## Reigning Champions take on Home Country advantage in eagerly awaited match-up

A week today the first games of the World Team Disc Golf Championships will have started. Round 1 is in a Ten Team round robin format with each country fielding teams of 6 players. Every player in each team will play 3 Singles matches and 6 Doubles matches against their opponents - all matchplay over 9 holes of the beautiful parkland course that is Essex University. Every match - singles or doubles - is worth 2 points and all points are accumulated throughout Round 1 to produce an initial order from 1st to 10th place.

This throws up some interesting possibilities when we look at the detailed schedule. Countries that may not win the whole match could still gain points through their best players. So France, seeded 8 before the event begins, have a better match up in the Open Division with top seeds Canada. Sylvain Gouge (FRA) has a PDGA Rating of 1003, second only to Finland's Juho Parviainen, while top Open player for Canada, Chris Alden, is rated at 989. Though Sylvain and Chris don't meet in the Singles match ups for Round 1 they will play against each other in the doubles format and Gouge could earn points against Finland, Czech Republic and Croatia in his Singles matches. This could provide France with crucial points in securing a top 8 finish in Round 1 and moving on to challenge for medals in Rounds 2 and 3.

In the Women's Division Slovakia's Katka Bodova is the top rated player. Her country is seeded 7 but only top seeds Canada have another female player rated over 900 points. Katka, rated at 922, is due to play France, Great Britain and USA in Singles and is predicted to win all three matches though the scores between those countries may be too close to call based on the ratings of their other players in the Open, Masters and Junior Divisions.



*James Luton : top player for Team GBR*

One of the first Games of Round 1 sees defending champions USA matched against the home country - Great Britain. Though the USA are seeded 4th and GBR 6th home advantage will count for a lot and this could be the crucial match in the 9.00 start on Wednesday morning - it could well decide which of these teams makes it into the top 4 by Friday.

This first set of matches sees GBR top Open player James Luton pitted against top USA Open player Zac Ruziska. They are evenly matched on ratings with the USA player a few points ahead but Luton knows the Essex course well and recently won the Discraft sponsored 'Call to Arms' event at Essex. The other singles match sees the second seeded Open players in each team - and then the Doubles Match ups!



*Derek Robins: Team GBR Masters player*

All Doubles matches in Round 1 are Alternate Shot matchplay - so every player will make a contribution to their team. In that first match GBR third seeded player - Jon Tweed - will play with Masters legend and GBR Captain Derek Robins against strong USA opposition and Womens division Sophie Southgate will play with Declan Bransby - GBR top Junior. However, the highest rated Junior is Kevin Sheehan from USA so this will be a real test for the British pair.

Overall the top three seeds of Canada, Finland and New Zealand begin with a clear advantage over some of the other countries - but all have a relative weakness in at least one divisional match-up. Final placings will come down to how each team manages their player roster and limit leakage of points to all the other teams, but especially in

games between them selves. The matches involving their Juniors will be some of the most enthralling to watch and could well come down to who handles the pressure best.

The format of Team Disc Golf is developing and evolving and it is clear that the WFDF principles of Equality and Inclusion have been prioritised in putting this particular format and schedule together. Individual players can contribute to their overall team score as well as in doubles play and all their scores count in helping decide how each team progress. How this actually works will be fascinating to see as each team scores as many points a possible in each game of round 1 and then move onto Rounds 2 and 3.



*Credit : Dan Brown Photography*