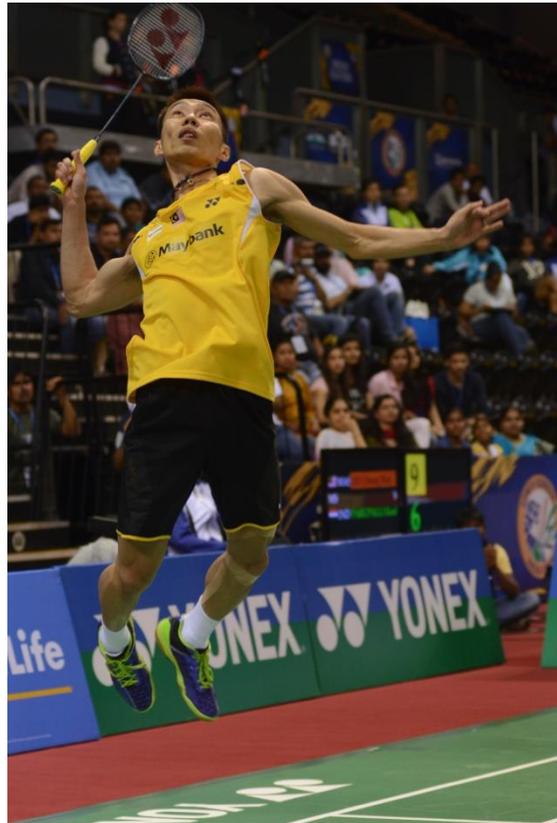




India Open 2014 - Day 4

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World No. 1 Lee Chong Wei broke the hearts of Indian fans for the third day in a row to reach the men's singles semi-finals of the Indian Open in New Delhi. Top seed Chong Wei got off to a slow start but stepped up a gear to snuff out the fire of P. Kashyap, the last Indian man remaining in the tournament, with a 21-15, 21-13 win in 40 minutes on Friday.

India's Kashyap Parupalli sparkled in parts against top seed Lee Chong Wei but the defending champion from Malaysia had plenty in reserve as he completed a straight-games win, 21-15 21-13. Inspired by the crowd, Parupalli threw himself all over the court to retrieve Lee's probing smashes and come close at 14-15 in the first game, but that was about all he could manage as Lee stepped up a gear. Lee took even lesser time to close out the second game.

China's Du Pengyu withstood a stern challenge from young gun Viktor Axelsen to reach the Men's Singles semi-finals at the Yonex-Sunrise India Open 2014.

Having seized the first game 21-11, Du looked set for an early evening as he rushed ahead in the second, only to see Axelsen work his way into the contest and move ahead 8-4. Thereafter, it was a neck-and-neck tussle which absorbed the fans who cheered one player and then the other inside Siri Fort Indoor Complex. At 15-all, neither player could muster more than a point lead until Axelsen managed a game point at 21-20. However, it wouldn't be so easy as his gritty rival fought back to take the next two points and hold match point at 22-21 amid some close and contentious net play. To his credit, the lanky Axelsen quickly regained his composure to snatch three straight points and force a third-game showdown.



That too proved an engrossing battle with both men's defensive skills being tested time and again. Axelsen was somewhat erratic in his shot-making at times and ultimately paid the price as the relentless Du (*above*) pounced to press on from 12-all to 16-14 and then 18-15. He arrived at 20-18 with a match point to spare and he needed it as Axelsen saved the first one before the Chinese secured victory: 21-11 22-24 21-19.

Today, three-time All-England Champion Chong Wei will play China's Du Pengyu, who outpaced former world junior champion Viktor Axelsen of Denmark 21-11, 22-25, 21-19.

Meanwhile, Christinna Pedersen and Kamilla Rytter Juhl (*left*) spoilt an otherwise perfect day for China in Women's Doubles. The Danish pair scored their third successive win over Olympic champions Tian Qing/Zhao Yunlei in the last quarter-finals match, after every other match had gone China's way. Pedersen and Rytter-Juhl took an hour to dismantle Tian/Zhao, 21-12 10-21 21-17, and head to the semi-finals, where they face Korea's Jung Kyung Eun/Kim Ha Na. The other half will see an all-Chinese clash

with Yu Yang/Tang Yuanting versus Ma Jin/Wang Xiaoli – ironically two pairs who have swapped partners for this tournament.



HIGHLIGHTS:

* Saina Nehwal once the nemesis of Chinese players, failed to make any headway against Wang Yihan. The eighth seed was outclassed in a display of precision, power and crafty variations by the lanky Wang, who set a scorching pace that the Indian could not match. The match was over rather quickly, 21-16 21-14, for third seed Wang. In another quarter-final, All England Champion Wang Shixian survived some probing questions yet again, as the second seed from China won her third straight three-games match.

Later commenting on the match, Saina said, "I played pretty well today. But I made too many errors on crucial points and that cost the match."

Yihan was all praise for her Indian opponent and said she could not have dared to take her lightly despite enjoying a 7-1 head-to-head record prior to this encounter. "I was confident but wasn't taking her lightly. I was feeling good about myself and played to my strength," she added.

* This time it was the turn of Korea's Sung Ji Hyun to be disappointed, with Wang emerging victorious in 72 minutes: 21-13 17-21 21-17. China has assured itself of the Women's Singles title, with the two Wangs facing off in one semi-final, and top seed Li Xuerui facing qualifier Liu Xin in the other.



* Top seeds in Men's Doubles, Hiroyuki Endo/Kenichi Hayakawa of Japan haven't had it easy from their first round. In the quarter-finals their compatriots Hirokatsu Hashimoto/Noriyasu Hirata put them through the wringer before the top seeds won, 21-15 21-23 21-18. They will play defending champions Liu Xiaolong/Qiu Zihan of China. Thailand's Maneepong Jongjit/Niphitphon Puangpuapech will challenge second seeds Mathias Boe/Carsten Mogensen of Denmark in the other semi-final.

* The impressive run of qualifiers Chan Peng Soon/Lai Pei Jing of Malaysia ended in Mixed Doubles after they put up another good show; this time against Ko Sung Hyun/Kim Ha Na of Korea. However, the new combination was no match for the Asian champions in the third game and Ko/Kim sealed their semi-final place with a 21-15 19-21 21-10 score. The victors face three-time champions Tontowi Ahmad/Liliyana Natsir of Indonesia while China's Zhang Nan/Zhao Yunlei take on Denmark's Joachim Fischer Nielsen/Christinna Pedersen.

Results:

Men's Singles

4-Jan O Jorgensen (DEN) bt Takuma Ueda (JPN) 21-11, 21-13, 1- Lee Chong Wei (MAL) bt P. Kashyap (CHN) 21-15, 21-13, 2-Chen Long (CHN) bt Hans-Kristian Vittinghus (Den) 21-17, 21-15, 7-Pengyu Du (CHN) bt Viktor Axelsen (DEN) 21-11, 22-24, 21-19

Women's Singles

1-Li Xuerui (CHN) bt 5-Yeon Ju Bae (KOR) 21-7, 21-15; Xin (F) Liu (CHN) bt Aprilla Yuswandari (INA) 21-15, 21-8 ; 3-Wang Yihan(CHN) bt 8- Saina Nehwal (IND) 21-16, 21-14, 2- Shixian Wang (CNH) bt 6-Ji Hyun Sung (KOR) 21-13, 17-21, 21-17

Men's Doubles

Maneepong Jongjit /Nipitphon Puangpuapech (THA) bt Hung Ling Chen/Chia Pin Lu (TPE) 21-14, 21-17

Women's Doubles

Kyung Eun Jung/Ha Na Kim (KOR) bt Vivian Kah Mun Hoo/Khe Wei Woon (MAS) 21-9, 21-17; 6-Jin Ma/Xiaoli Wang (CHN) bt 2-Misaki Matsutomo/Ayaka Takahashi 21-13, 21-18; Yuanting Tang/Yang (F) Yu bt Wen Hsing Cheng/Pei Chen Hsieh (TPE) 15-21, 21-12, 21-15

Mixed Doubles

1-Zhang Nan/Zhao Yunlei (CHN) bt Debby Susanto/Praveen Jordan (INA) 19-21, 21-10, 21-13; 3-Joachim Fischer Nielsen/Christinna Pedersen (DEN) bt 5-Sudket Prapakamol/Saralee Thongthongkam 21-17, 21-5; 2-Tontowi Ahmad/Liliyana Natsir (INA) bt Mads Pieler Kolding/Kamilla Rytter Juhl 21-15, 21-9; 4-Sun Hyun Ko/Ha Na Kim (KOR) bt Peng Soon Chan/Pei Chen Hsieh (TPE) 21-15, 19-21, 21-10.
