

2017 CEV SNOW VOLLEYBALL EUROPEAN TOUR ŠPINDLERŮV MLÝN



Kufa brothers victorious on home snow

David Kufa & Robert Kufa are the new men's champions at the Spindleruv Mlyn stop on the 2017 CEV Snow Volleyball European Tour. The second-seeded Czech brothers triumphed on home snow after winning the much anticipated final with the top-seeded Polish duo Michal Matyja & Piotr Janiak. This way, Bobb Kufa defended the title he earned last year in partnership with Matyja.

The two pairs, who were pre-favorites to reach the final face-off, did not allow any surprises along the way. Interestingly, all seven men's matches that were played on the snow courts at Svaty Petr Valley Station on Sunday were clashes between Czech and Polish duos.

In their semifinal match, the Kufa brothers fought their way back from a one-set deficit against ninth-seeded Piotr Groszek & Grzegorz Rusin to win by 2-1 (9-11, 11-9, 11-8) after 23 minutes of play. The story of the other semifinal was almost identical. In a match that lasted 23 minutes as well, sixth-seeded Tomas Pala & Jan Chalupa won the first set, but then Matyja & Janiak cruised to a 2-1 (9-11, 11-6, 11-3) win.

The third place match was the fastest one of the day. In only 14 minutes, Poland's Groszek & Rusin crushed their Czech opponents Pala & Chalupa with a 2-0 (11-5, 11-7) shutout and claimed the bronze medals.

Then it was time for the big final. In front of over 400 cheering spectators, the two teams put a lot of precision into their attacks, exchanging points almost throughout the first set. In the conclusive moments, one kill block by Janiak gave the Poles the break point that tilted it their way. Inspired by the home crowd, the Czech duo kept more concentrated than the opponents in the following three sets and celebrated victorious after 3-1 (9-11, 11-3, 11-8, 11-8).

"Two weeks ago in Iran we lost to this team and now we got our revenge, so it's awesome - we like it!" exclaimed the Kufa brothers after the match. "It is really nice to win here, in the Czech Republic, as a home team. The crowd was amazing! They cheered for us and helped us win. We really enjoyed it. We will play at at least one more tournament this year and we are really looking forward to the European Championship next year. The sport is really growing up and this is great! This event was very cool and we would like to thank the organizers!"

Czech rookies triumph with women's title

An all-Czech all-rookie final was Sunday's highlight of the women's competition at the second stop on the 2017 CEV Snow Volleyball European Tour. Ninth-seeded Marketa Bendikova & Nicole Dostalova triumphed with the gold and put a little premature ending to

the Cinderella story of qualifiers Ludmila Lojkova & Radka Tuckova by beating them in straight sets in the last match in Spindleruv Mlyn.

In Saturday's second round Bendikova & Dostalova suffered a tie-break loss to top-seeded compatriots Anna Dostalova & Michaela Knoblochova. But, once in the losers' bracket, they never lost a set again, cruising through five matches all the way to the top of the podium. In their semifinal against another Czech duo, fourth-seeded Natalie Kolderova & Andrea Rybova, they took 14 minutes to manage a 2-0 (12-10, 11-5) victory.

In the other semifinal, Lojkova & Tuckova, who had to go through Friday's qualifications to make the main draw competition, claimed a sensational come-from-behind victory against pre-favorites Dostalova & Knoblochova - 2-1 (9-11, 11-8, 11-8).

The final itself, especially in the first two sets, was an interesting tough battle between the two snow volleyball rookie teams, but it ended too soon, with Bendikova & Dostalova rejoicing after the third set with a 3-0 (11-9, 11-9, 11-6) win.

"We play snow volleyball for the first time and we did not expect to come out on the top. It is really beautiful! It was a good experience for us. It is really difficult to move on the court, but we had a lot of fun and we hope we will come back. Now we go back to the Czech Extraliga and we will play snow volleyball again maybe next year," Marketa and Nicole said immediately after their winning rally.

In the third-place match, the #1 seed of the tournament, Dostalova & Knoblochova, claimed a come-from-behind 2-1 (7-11, 11-8, 11-5) victory over Kolderova & Rybova and settled for the bronze. They started the day with yet another tie-break win. In the last losers' bracket round, Dostalova & Knoblochova defeated the second-seeded Slovaks Silvia Poszmikova & Zuzana Snopkova by 2-1 (11-2, 12-14, 11-7), thus shaping up an all-Czech semifinal line-up.

Further information regarding the tour, the registration, kids activities or press pictures are online on www.snowvolleyball.com or follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) #snowvolleyball!