

Top seeds ignite Nigeria Open



Scotland's Gavin Rungay at the Nigeria Open in Lagos, Nigeria

They were considered title contenders and this they showed in the first round of the singles event of the ITTF Challenge Nigeria Open 'Lagos 2017'.

From local hero – Aruna Quadri to former champions, Egypt's Omar Assar; Finland's Benedek Olah as well as 2009 mixed doubles world champion, Qatar's Li Ping, emphatic victories were recorded just as debutant – **South Africa's Kurt Lingeveldt worked his way into the round of 32 after an epic 4-3 win over Nigeria's Bode Kayode.**

Kurt Lingeveldt, who was featuring in his maiden ITTF Challenge, was particularly excited by the huge support from the fans.

"This is my first ITTF Challenge and it has been exciting and unbelievable for me with the huge support from the crowd coupled with the presence of top players. I was so nervous in the match and I was trying to be careful and make sure i put the ball on the corner. I was also hoping not to make the match easy for my opponent. I am happy making it to the second round because my goal initially was to qualify from the group and now I am in the round of 32. Now I am setting last 16 target for myself now," said Kurt LINGEVELDT.

Also, India's Sanil Shetty, Scotland's Gavin RUMGAY while Egypt's trio of Ahmed Saleh, Mohamed El-Beiali and Khaled Assar also sailed through to the second round.

However, some players suffered surprising defeats as former Commonwealth champion, Monday Meroothun was bundled out by France's Jean Gregoire. The French star beat Merotohun 4-0 while toast of Lagos, Olajide Omotayo was eliminated by Russia's Vasilij Filatov. Despite taking a lead twice in the game, Omotayo failed to capitalise on this to lose 4-3 to the Russian.

On Saturday August 12, the battle for supremacy in the singles and doubles event continue as the top seeds and others take to the table for the second round matches of the singles.