



PPA TOUR ASIA · SINGAPORE OPEN

Singapore Open wraps: Hong Kong's "Jack" adds another title, Yufei Long doubles up

The inaugural PPA Asia 500 Singapore Open (July 23–26) is in the books — 150+ pros in the draw, sold-out weekend sessions.

Final results: Hong Kong's Hong Kit Wong ("Jack") beat Adam Harvey for the men's singles title — his third singles gold in his last four international starts. China's Yufei Long took the double, winning women's singles gold and pairing with Hong Kong's Kara Wheatley for doubles gold. Men's doubles gold went to Collin Johns/Len Yang, who beat Hien Truong/Kenta Miyoshi in the final. The weekend's biggest upset came in mixed doubles: 16-year-old American Jaeda Minniefield (Atlanta) paired with Vietnam's Luc Pham to take gold as the No. 6 seed.

SINGAPORE OPEN · CHAMPIONS

MS	Hong Kit Wong def. Adam Harvey
WS	Yufei Long def. Annie Xie
WD	Yufei Long / Kara Wheatley
MD	Collin Johns / Len Yang
XD	Jaeda Minniefield / Luc Pham (No. 6 seed)

Fig. 1 · Yufei Long completed the women's singles-and-doubles double; the mixed doubles title was the weekend's biggest upset, with 16-year-old American Minniefield and Vietnam's Luc Pham winning gold as the No. 6 seed.

MLP Major League Pickleball · US Domestic Team League

New Jersey 5s and the St. Louis Shock locked in a 7-point battle for first

MLP's regular season wrapped today (Aug 2); playoffs open August 7 in Dallas, with the New York City Finals closing the season August 28–30.

MLP's points system runs on two separate tracks (verified via live screenshots): across the 9-stop regular season, New Jersey 5s leads the cumulative standings with 118 points to the St. Louis Shock's 111 — just a 7-point gap. But at the standalone Edward Jones Mid-Season Tournament in Grand Rapids, the Shock went a perfect 4–0 (100%) to take the title outright, with New Jersey 5s again finishing runner-up (3–1, 75%) and Columbus Sliders taking third. Read together, the two tables tell the same story: New Jersey 5s and the St. Louis Shock are this season's clear top two.

Regular-Season StandingsTop 5

	Team	Pts	Avg
1	New Jersey 5s	118	19.7
2	St. Louis	111	18.5
3	LA Mad Drops	86	14.3
4	Columbus	83	13.8
5	Brooklyn	78	13.0

Dallas Flash sits 6th (72 pts, up one spot).

Mid-Season TournamentStandalone event

	Team	Record	Win%
1	St. Louis	4–0	100%
2	New Jersey 5s	3–1	75%
3	Columbus	4–1	80%

Scored separately; does not count toward the regular-season standings.

MONEY DESK

The pyramid: how the real money in pro pickleball actually breaks down

The UPA (parent of both the PPA Tour and MLP) distributes roughly **\$33 million** a year across about 130 contracted players — but that money follows a steep pyramid, and league pay isn't even the biggest line item for the top stars.

UPA LEAGUE PAY · AVERAGE BY TIER

Top 2	~\$1.5M each
Top 20 marketable	~\$750K
Next 50	~\$250K
Bottom 80	~\$30K
Unsigned	\$0 (league pay)

~130 contracted players
~\$33M distributed annually

2026 model shift The UPA is moving from guaranteed salaries to performance pay: over **\$15 million** in domestic prize money and **\$5 million** internationally — the first time results directly drive pay, mirroring individual sports like tennis and golf.

Prize money is the smallest bucket Industry analysis consistently finds that for most contracted players, league pay is the largest income source and on-court prize money is actually the smallest — the opposite of what broadcast coverage suggests.

Endorsements are the real engine The top stars' real wealth comes from equipment deals: Anna Leigh Waters signed a three-year, **\$10M+** deal with Franklin (~\$3.3M/year); Ben Johns' lifetime JOOLA deal carries roughly \$1M in base pay plus \$500K+ in paddle-sales royalties — both dwarfing their ~\$1.5M league contracts.

What the two biggest stars actually make

Player	2026 est. gross	Est. take-home	Career prize money
Anna Leigh Wat...	~\$6.6M	~\$4.0M	\$7.27M (all-t...
Ben Johns	~\$4.8M	~\$3.0M	–

League pay accounts for roughly a quarter of each player's total income; the rest comes mainly from equipment endorsements, corporate exhibition appearance fees (~\$50K per event for top stars), and other commercial income.

MLP's roster spending war

The St. Louis Shock spent **\$1.555M** building its 2026 roster — \$325K to retain core players, then another \$1.23M to re-draft Anna Bright — triggering a public Twitter dispute between team owners over whether the spending gap between franchises is fair. MLP has since announced a **salary cap and floor arriving for the 2027 season**, and pushed its trade deadline back to July 12 to give teams time to prepare for the new rules.

The one-line takeaway: for the average contracted pro, league pay is the main course and prize money is the garnish; for the two biggest stars, equipment endorsements are the real printing press — which is why landing a top brand deal, not just reaching a final, is the real inflection point in most pros' financial careers.

GEAR LAB

JOOLA lands DUPR's official ball

JOOLA announced this month that its HC-40 is now DUPR's official ball — the latest move by an equipment leader to expand its reach from paddles to standards across the entire ecosystem.

JOOLA On July 23, JOOLA announced its HC-40 ball is now the official ball of DUPR, the sport's leading global rating system — extending JOOLA's standards footprint from paddles into match balls.

INDUSTRY

The youth wave and club expansion: two curves steepening together

Signing a 14-year-old to a pro contract is no longer news — it's routine. Meanwhile indoor club expansion is turning from an American story into a genuinely global one.

The youth wave becomes the headline

The 2026 MLP draft set a record for teenagers stepping straight into starting roles: 15-year-old Tama Shimabukuro went 9th overall to the Utah Black Diamonds for a reported **\$125,000**; 13-year-old Elsie Hendershot and 18-year-old Kiara Kunimoto joined the same draft class. The UPA has recently signed a batch of top juniors through 2028 alongside extensions for established stars, building out a full pipeline of "veteran core, youth reinforcement."

INDOOR CLUBS · GLOBAL EXPANSION

The Picklr

61 open · 500+ new clubs in development
Simultaneous expansion: Japan, Canada, Australia, NZ

Pickleball Kingdom

New club opens in Roseville, CA
Continued densification across New Jersey

Indoor facility market

1,200+ new facilities in two years
Market has crossed \$3 billion

The Picklr's co-founder:
"2026 is going to be a big year for M&A in pickleball"

Fig. 2 · The Picklr co-founder Jorge Barragan: World Cup participation grew from 32 to 78 countries in a single year — "at that rate, I'd bet on seeing pickleball at Brisbane 2032."

MARKET OUTLOOK

The distribution matters more than the total

This issue's most important signal is buried in the pay structure: in a league distributing \$33 million a year, the top 0.02% of earners take home roughly as much as the bottom 60% combined. That kind of steep, K-shaped distribution closely mirrors mature individual sports like tennis and golf — a sign the sport is maturing fast, but also a signal that financial pressure on mid-tier pros isn't going away.

For brands and investors weighing entry, signing the two headline stars is expensive but commercially proven, especially for cross-border reach; the mid-tier player pool is the higher-value, longer-horizon play.