

# European Junior Championships 18 & under

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## Two mouthwatering finals to crown a great week

Marco Keller

„Save the best for last“. This song of Vanessa Williams could also be an anthem for the 21st edition of the European Junior Championships. On the last day of a week of high-level competition with the two heroes from Graubünden Simona Waltert (quarterfinalist) and Jakub Paul (gold medal in doubles) we can expect two outstanding singles finals, also as a compensation for the weather trouble in the first part of the week. We take a closer look at the singles finalists now.

**Marta Kostyuk:** The Ukrainian justified to be number one of the seeding. After a bit of early difficulties - she con-



ceded 17 games in the first two matches - she got stronger and stronger,

losing only a total of 8 games in her next three matches. In the semifinal she run over Daria Kuczer of Poland who was tired after her effort on Friday versus Waltert. Since January, Kostyuk is a household name among insiders. At only 14 years and 7 months she won the Australian Open junior title (Under 18), and beat Rebeka Masarova in the final at Rod Laver Arena. Experts see a future top star in her. Yesterday she already won the doubles gold.

**Kaia Juvan:** The number 6 seed from Slovenia had to fight hard to come atop of Serbian Olga Danilovic, with whom she had conquered the Wimbledon



doubles throne a couple of weeks back. The 16-year-old from Ljubljana won the Orange Bowl last December and was recently a finalist at the prestigious Wimbledon preparation tournament at Roehampton. In Wimbledon she lost to today's opponent Kostyuk.

**Zsombor Piros:** It took the number 2 seed from Hungary some time to get his engine started. In the high level opening round versus Swiss Henry Von der Schulenburg but also in later rounds he had to come from behind in the scoreline several times. However, it seemed that he was able to adapt his game to the score at leisure and he hasn't lost a set yet. This year, he won two Grand Slams: The Australian Open in singles and the French Open in doubles. Yesterday, he added a bronze medal in doubles to his collection.

**Corentin Moutet:** It is the same for the topseeded French as it is for Kostyuk: He has improved continuously over the course of the tournament. In yesterday's semifinal, he didn't lose one game against the tired Russian Alexey Zakharov, taking revenge for the loss at Roland Garros. Since the abrupt end to last year's final versus Stefanos Tsitsipas, where he retired before match-point, he has improved considerably. The skilled lefthander is on the way to establish himself among the professionals. Courtesy of several titles in ITF-Future tournaments, he has already advanced to number 339 in the ATP ranking.

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