《重磅！中国乒乓男团集体退出澳大利亚公开赛》

导读:国际乒联世界巡回赛澳大利亚公开赛将于7月份展开角逐，根据国际乒联官网公布的赛事消息，中国男乒包括张继科、许昕、樊振东在内的多名运动员集体退出比赛。这也是继成都之后，中国男团再一次退赛。

The powerful China men’s table tennis team on Thursday pulled out of next week’s Australian Open, deepening a crisis sparked by the removal of their head coach.

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The team’s withdrawal from next week’s event on the Gold Coast was announced by the governing International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) in a statement issued Thursday.

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It comes days after the world’s top three players -- Ma Long, Fan Zhendong and Xu Xin -- failed to appear for their second-round singles matches at the prestigious China Open in a protest at the decision to relieve the highly respected Liu Guoliang of his duties as head coach.

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The Chinese Table Tennis Association (CTTA) launched an investigation into the embarrassing no-show.

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"It is unfortunate that the decision was made to withdraw the entire men's team," the ITTF said in the statement. It called the move "disappointing news for all table tennis fans around the world".

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The Chinese women's team will play, the ITTF said.

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Two Chinese coaches also pulled out of the event in Chengdu last week, triggering a furore in table tennis-mad China.

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The coaches and players were upset that Liu, a former Grand Slam champion, had lost his job as head coach in a reshuffle at the top of the CTTA.

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The Australian Open, an event on the sports's top-level, starts on July 4.

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