



Three medals for youthful para squad

Author: Paul Stimpson

Posted On: June 11, 2018

The young, inexperienced squad of British Para Table Tennis Team Pathway and Development athletes secured three team medals on the final day of the PTT Spanish Open in Sant Cugat del Vallès, near Barcelona.

There were bronze medals for Marc Bonnar and Noel Thomas in men's class 1-2, Ryan Henry and his Australian partner Nathan Pellissier in men's class 8 and Craig Allen and Shae Thakker in men's class 9-10.

Ormesby Table Tennis Club members Bonnar and Thomas started their semi-final well against the Greek/Argentinian/Japanese partnership of Christos Stamou, Fernando Eberhardt and Mitsuhiro Matsuo, combining well to win the doubles against Stamou and Eberhardt 3-1 including a titanic second set 18-16.

Thomas, from Redcar, who was making his international debut at this tournament, lost the first singles to the experienced Stamou 3-0 and although Bonnar fought back from 2-0 down to level at 2-2 against Matsuo the Japanese player proved just the stronger in the deciding fifth set to win the match 3-2 and the tie 2-1.

"After a tough defeat against Spain it was good to bounce back against Finland, winning the doubles and my singles to finish second in our group," said 29-year-old Bonnar, from Ingleby.

"The semi-final was close and overall I'm happy with our first team event together – winning two out of three doubles matches. I'm excited to see what we can achieve together in the future."

"I had a slow and nervous start to my first ever international competition losing 3-0 in my first match," admitted 38-year-old Thomas, "but I managed to settle and play some good table tennis to reach the quarter-finals in the singles.

"The nerves kicked in again but I competed really well and pushed my opponent all the way despite losing a hard fought match 3-0. The team event was a new experience for me so it was good to play alongside Marc and we played really well together.

"The semi-final was a tough match but we played excellent doubles to come back from 1-0 down to win 3-1.

Unfortunately I lacked the experience to win my singles match and we lost the tie 2-1.

"For my first international tournament to reach the quarter-final of the singles and win a bronze medal in team I'm over the moon. It's been a valuable experience and I'm excited for the future."

Henry and Pellissier came through their quarter-final against the second Swedish team 2-1 and then lost a close semi-final against the Dutch team of Jean-Paul Montanus, Andrianus Van Amerongen and Devin Wassink 2-1.

"I'm happy to take a bronze medal," said 17-year-old Henry from Ardrossan. "I think that I played well and picked up a few good wins along the way in both singles and team events. I've been training hard for the last few months and feel that it is starting to pay off."

Allen and Thakker made it through to the semi-finals of men's class 9-10 after their group was decided on countback but the greater experience of Japan's Koyo Iwabuchi and Bunpot Sillapakong from Thailand was decisive and after the young British pair lost the doubles 3-0, Iwabuchi defeated 14-year-old Thakker 3-0 in the first singles.

"I was very disappointed with my singles event," said Thakker, from Denham, "but am pleased to have been able to bounce back for the team event with the help and support of the coaches. I'm very happy to have won a bronze medal with Craig."

Allen took bronze earlier in the event in the men's class 9 singles after losing his semi-final to the world No 3 and European bronze medallist Juan Perez Gonzalez 3-0.

The 23-year-old from Bromsgrove said: "I felt that I played well in the singles although it was a tough semi-final.

"I'm also pleased to win bronze in the team event with Shae. We have played together a couple of times and I think we played well together. There is always more work to do so I will be back on the practice tables on Wednesday improving my game."

The full British squad competing in the PTT Spanish Open was:

Craig Allen – Class 9 (Bromsgrove)

Theo Bishop – Class 7 (Rossendale)

Alex Bland – Class 7 (Rotherham)

Marc Bonnar – Class 2 (Ingleby, Middlesborough)

Lucie Bouron – Class 3 (Bracknell)

Daniel Bullen – Class 5 (St Neots)

Cellan Hall – Class 5 (Bridgend)

Ryan Henry – Class 8 (Ardrossan)

Shae Thakker – Class 10 (Denham, Bucks)

Noel Thomas – Class 2 (Redcar)

Downloaded From:

<https://newsarchive.tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/three-medals-for-youthful-para-squad/>