

Drinkhall goes through all guns blazing

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19 year-old Paul Drinkhall carried England's hopes safely into the last 32 of the Mens Singles with an impressive 4-0 win over World no. 83 Lars Hielscher (Germany). Playing on the Show-Court (Court no. one) in front of a near capacity crowd the England no. one showed no signs of nerves, with a fluent, flawless display of controlled table tennis. The first four points of the match went Pauls way almost as quickly as it has taken you to read that sentence. He beat his higher-ranked opponent 11-9, 11-9, 11-4, 11-8. Paul's reward is a mouth-watering clash against World no. nine – Chen Qi (China).

There will definitely be a new Mens Singles Champion this year. Fact. The second former Champion taking part – 1995 English Open Champion Damien Eloi (France), now ranked no. 62 globally departed proceedings, beaten over five furious games by the all-action Chuan Chih-Yuan (Chinese Taipei) 11-6, 10-12, 11-7, 13-11, 11-4.

Image: Paul Drinkhall, courtesy tabletennisphotos.com

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