



Stockdale and Perry on podium

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Martin Perry and Jack Stockdale led the way for the British team at the PTT Costa Brava Open in Platja D'Aro, Spain, taking bronze medals in the men's class 6 and men's class 10 singles respectively.

Perry began with a 3-1 win over the Spaniard Francisco Rodriguez and then came back from 2-0 down to beat the American world No 13 Ian Seidenfeld 11-8 in the fifth before securing top position in the group with a 3-0 win against Petr Hnizdo from Czech Republic.

The 24-year-old from Paisley was a comfortable 3-0 winner of his quarter-final against the Italian Matteo Parenzan and pushed the world No 1 Alvaro Valera all the way in their semi-final which the Spaniard won 3-1.

"I feel like I've had a very mature head these past two weeks," said Perry, who won singles bronze and team gold in Italy last week and is self-funding to compete in Spain. "I've tried to be as disciplined as possible with my game plans and I feel it has really paid off.

"I've had some really good wins and some improved performances from Italy and my match with Valera was incredibly tight. He's such a clever and experienced player who I have nothing but respect for and I think my coaching team and I approached the match with the correct tactics; it just wasn't to be today.

"I'm really happy to have won singles bronze medals in Spain and Italy and I just want to thank everyone – UK Sport, BPTT and individual sponsors – for their support. It's great to start the season so well and I'm really looking forward to what lies ahead."

In the group stages Stockdale put up a good fight in the first two sets against the former world champion and world No 1 Jose Ruiz Reyes before the Spaniard pulled away in the third for a 3-0 win. After a 3-1 win against Jagannath Mukherjee from India the 18-year-old from Romford came out on top in a titanic battle against Angel Garrido from Spain 15-13 in the fifth. That took him through to the quarter-finals where he beat another Spaniard Ander Cepas 3-1 and he lost nothing in defeat to Jorge Cardona, the Spanish world No 11 in three close sets the semi-final.

"I'm very happy to have got to the semi-finals," said Stockdale, "especially getting out of a group with two higher ranked players. I had several chances against Cardona that I didn't take so there are improvements to be made but it is a nice feeling to get a medal. Overall I'm very happy with the progress I've made and how I played."

Alex Bland won his first match in men's class 7 in four close sets against Pablo Romero Parreno from Spain and was far from disgraced against Katsuyoshi Yagi, taking the third set 12-10 before the Japanese world No 8 clinched the match 12-10 in the fourth. The teenager from Rotherham took second place in the group with a 3-0 win against Rasmus Hensen from Denmark and lost in the quarter-final to the Paralympic silver medallist Israel Pereira Stroh from Brazil 3-0.

In men's class 5 Cellan Hall won one of his three group matches 3-0 against Hakon Bjarkason from Iceland and fought back really well from 2-0 down against the Korean Kyung Young Kim before losing the fifth set 11-7. A 3-0 defeat to the world No 10 Bart Brands from Netherlands meant that the Welsh champion finished third in his group.

Scotland's Ryan Henry also recorded a win in his men's class 8 group, 3-1 against the Spaniard Ricard Sabio Ruiz but failed to progress after losses to the Canadian Ian Kent 3-0 and Roy Van Der Burg from Netherlands 3-1.

With current world champions and Paralympic medallists competing in Spain it was tough competition for the rest of the young British squad of Pathway, Development and Futures athletes and Lee York (men's class 4), Dan Bullen (men's class 5), Theo Bishop (men's class 6), Craig Allen (men's class 9) and Dylan Tynan (men's class 10) all went out after losing their group matches.

The full British Squad for the Costa Brava Open is:

Cellan Hall – Class 5 (21, Cardiff)
Daniel Bullen – Class 5 (21, St Neots)
Theo Bishop – Class 7 (15, Bury)
Alex Bland – Class 7 (19, Rotherham)
Ryan Henry – Class 8 (18, Ardrossan)
Craig Allen – Class 9 (24, Bromsgrove)
Jack Stockdale – Class 10 (18, Romford)
Lee York – Class 4 (30, Scunthorpe)
Dylan Tynan – Class 10 (15, Southwark)

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