



DRINKHALL WINS SERBIA OPEN!

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Paul Drinkhall became the first English player to win two ITTF World Tour events as he won the Serbia Open today.

Drinkhall, the 12th seed in Belgrade, came from 2-0 down to beat unseeded Abdel-Kader Salifou 4-2.

Having lost the first game 11-8, Paul held game points in the second but lost it 12-10.

Winning the third was imperative and he did so 12-10, saving one game point.

Thereafter, it was a procession as Drinkhall won the next three games 3, 2, 1 as the Frenchman had no answer to his power.

[Click here to watch Drinkhall v Salifou](#)

It adds to the Spanish Open title Drinkhall won in 2014. Carl Prean is the only other English player to win a World Tour event.

Ceri-Ann Davies, coaching Paul, is believed to be the first female coach to guide a player to a men's World Tour victory.

Drinkhall said: "It's great to win the tournament but it's more about playing well and that's what I've managed to do in every match. Putting the wins together, eventually you're going to win the tournament.

"I knew it was possible from the start of the tournament, it was just about performing well in each match and not getting carried away with who's next.

"It's nice to get ranking points but it's more about playing how I can play and then ranking points take care of themselves.

"At 2-0 down, I don't think anything changed. The second set I was leading and even the first, I was in it. I got

momentum and having Ceri in the corner helped a lot.”

Earlier, in the semi-finals, Drinkhall led 2-0 and trailed 3-2 against Andrea Landrieu of France before getting through in a deciding game.

[Click here to watch Drinkhall v Landrieu](#)

The final score was 4-3 (11-2, 11-3, 8-11, 6-11, 9-11, 11-4, 11-5).

The other semi-final saw unseeded Salifou come from 2-0 down to defeat 19th seed Brian Afanador of Puerto Rico 4-2.

Yesterday, Drinkhall defeated No 1 seed Stefan Fegerl of Austria in a deciding seventh game in this first match of the day, in the last 16, recovering from 3-2 down to do so.

[Click here to watch Drinkhall v Fegerl](#)

He then disposed of surprise package Shogo Tahara of Japan, who had earlier knocked out fifth seed Sam Walker and 10th seed Harmeet Desai, in five games in the quarters.

In the under-21s, Tom Jarvis also knocked out the top seed – Germany’s Tobia Hippler – in three straight in the quarter-finals, but he went out to Leo de Nodrest of France in a decider in the semi-finals.

[Click here to watch Jarvis v de Nodrest](#)

Walker & Drinkhall were beaten in the last 16 of the doubles.

Results

Men’s Singles

Round of 16

Drinkhall bt Stefan Fegerl (AUT) 4-3 (11-7, 5-11, 9-11, 11-9, 2-11, 11-5, 11-6)

Quarter-final

Drinkhall bt Shogo Tahara (JPN) 4-1 (11-2, 11-9, 7-11, 11-9, 11-7)

Semi-final

Drinkhall bt Andrea Landrieu (FRA) 4-3 (11-2, 11-3, 8-11, 6-11, 9-11, 11-4, 11-5)

Final

Drinkhall bt Abdel-Kader Salifou (FRA) 4-2 (8-11, 10-12, 12-10, 11-3, 11-2, 11-1)

Under-21 Men’s Singles

Quarter-final

Jarvis bt Tobias Hippler (GER) 3-0 (11-8, 11-5, 11-7)

Semi-final

Leo de Nodrest (FRA) bt Jarvis 3-2 (11-9, 9-11, 11-4, 4-11, 11-8)

Men’s Doubles

Round of 16

Bence Majoros (HUN) & Tobias Rasmussen (DEN) bt Paul Drinkhall & Sam Walker 3-0 (11-6, 11-7, 11-8)

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