



Bronzes for Gilroy and debutant Williams

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Welsh teenager Grace Williams marked her international debut by taking a bronze medal in the women's class 9-10 team event at the PTT Dutch Open in Stadskanaal today and Barnsley's Sue Gilroy also took bronze in the women's class 3-5 team event.

Williams, part of the British Para Table Tennis Team Pathway Squad, and her team partner Shella Dwi Radayana from India lost their opening match to the No 1 seeds and European champions from Turkey, Neslihan Kavas and Umran Ertis, but progressed from their group with a 2-0 win against world team bronze medallist Mirjana Lucic from Croatia and 15-year-old Baby Sahana Ravi from India.

They lost their semi-final against the Ukraine team of class 6 world No 1 Maryna Lytovchenko, Iryna Shynkarova and Marharyta Saltanovska 2-0.

"I came out here to have my first international tournament and to enjoy the experience," said 16-year-old Williams from Llanfyllin. "I never expected to get a medal and I'm happy with my performance as a whole and can't wait to continue on this journey."

Gilroy teamed up with the 18-year-old Italian Carlotta Ragazzini and after losing their first match to class 3 European team gold medallists Andela Muzinic and Helena Dretar from Croatia 2-1 they secured their place in the knockout stages with a 2-0 win against the Indonesian team of Tarsilem Tarsilem, Osrita Muslim and Nur Aminah.

Gilroy and Ragazzini won their quarter-final against Giada Rossi and Michela Brunelli from Italy 2-1 but had to settle for bronze after losing 2-0 to Paralympic champions China, class 5 world No 1 Zhang Bian, class 4 world No 2 Zhou Ying and class 3 world No 3 Xue Juan.

"I feel my standard isn't quite there at the moment," said Gilroy, "but I know it can be and I'll strive to get it there for next year. I played much better in patches during the team event; Carlotta and I won every doubles except against the Chinese and played extremely well in the singles against Indonesia, Croatia and Italy.

"I narrowly lost out in several games against the Chinese so feel better about my performance today. I know I have the ability to be beating the top four in the world as I showed against the Chinese but I need to find a bit more consistency."

Pathway athlete Cellan Hall and his Indian team partner Piyush Sharma went out of the men's class 4-5 team event after losing 2-0 to class 4 Paralympic champion Abdullah Ozturk and class 5 European team gold medallist Hamza Caliskan from Turkey and 2-0 to Gerardus Van Grunsven and Sem Roelofs from Netherlands.

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