

British pairing fall to Chinese Superstars

Author: British League

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English involvement in the English Open is over, although it took two of the modern game's greatest players – 2009 World Champion and current World no. three – Wang Hao and the 2008 Olympic Champion and current World no. five Ma Lin to beat the top English pairing – Paul Drinkhall and Liam Pitchford in the Mens Doubles. The English pairing did incredibly well in the first two games but when victory somehow eluded them in a show-stopping second end you felt that there could only be one pair of winners. Sure enough, the Chinese masters advanced 11-8, 15-13, 11-3, 11-2.

They will meet Jung Younk Sik (World no. 38) and Kim Min Seok (World no. 59). This young Korean pairing ousted top seeds Gao Ning / Yang Zi (Singapore) ranked no's 24 and 57 in the World respectively. The Koreans won 11-8, 11-6, 9-11, 11-4, 11-9.

Two more Chinese pairings qualified for the Mens Doubles Semi-Finals. Another of the Sports greatest ever players duly advanced – three times World Singles Champion Wang Liqin paired with Chen Qi (best known for winning the 2004 Olympic Mens Doubles crown with Ma Lin). Wang and Chen had few problems blasting their way past the Croatian pairing of World no. 73 Andrej Gacina and World no. 40 (the former World no. two) Zoran Primorac 11-2, 11-7, 11-5, 11-4.

They will play the new stars of Chinese and World Table Tennis – second seeds Xu Xin (World no. nine) and World no. four Zhang Jike in the Semi-Final. The Chinese pairing had to fight back from 3-2 down to get the better of World no. 83 – the increasingly impressive Seon Hyun Deok and World no. 16 and the 2004 Olympic Champion Ryu Seung Min 5-11, 11-4, 16-14, 9-11, 8-11, 11-7, 12-10.

Steve Kerns

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