

All went to plan on Day 1

Author: Paul Stimpson

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Day One of the World Individual Table Tennis Championships at the Ahoy Stadium in Rotterdam and our players faced a series of lower ranked players. Unfortunately, if players do not play much, then the world rankings can be very misleading as Danny and Darius can attest to.

In the Mens Singles Qualifications both Andrew Baggaley and Liam Pitchford had satisfying initial wins in 4 straight games but first Darius Knight and then Danny Reed soon found out that players ranked 1700+ in the world can still present real dangers. Darius faced a lanky Cuban with a good counter attack game and a huge forehand, first game went to Darius at Deuce from 6-10 down! The second went to Darius as well and in the third another comeback just failed Darius going down 9-11, the Cuban won the fourth game as well and alarm bells were ringing but Darius pulled out some super serving and forehand loops from some amazing angles to take the final two games.

Danny Reed faced a most unusual player at this level, Bader Saleh Bin Hayee from Bahrain, another with a 1700+ ranking, essentially the Bahraini was a blocker with good hands and some superb angles especially from the backhand. Bin Hayee won the first two games and was competing all the way in the crucial third game which Danny just claimed on deuce. Sage coaching from Alan Cooke to stay away from the Ben Hayee backhand allied with a certain deflation for the Bahraini as the third game slipped away, he looked like he expected the worst as he returned to his coach at that point. That is exactly what he got, Danny took the fourth comfortably, and won a tight fifth as by now Danny believed in himself and the final game was comfortable as well and Danny Reed took what was a tricky encounter 4-2.

The Womens Singles Qualification Groups only involve Hannah Hicks and her first opponent, Biljana Mladenova was comfortably despatched in four straight games. Hannah will face a greater test tomorrow when she faces the No 1 in the Group Manca Fajmut of Slovenia who is ranked about a hundred places above Hannah.

No worries in the doubles preliminaries so far either, Danny Reed and Hannah Hicks did drop the first end to a couple of young Chileans in the Mixed Doubles but the English pair tightened up their game after that and took the next three games. Darius Knight and Danny Reed had no problems overcoming a pair from Jordan in straight games

All the English results are below

Mens Singles

Qualification

Group 11

BAGGALEY Andrew ENG beat BEISENOV Samat KAZ 11-8, 11-6, 11-7, 11-3

Group 37

KNIGHT Darius ENG beat CAMPOS Jorge CUB 13-11, 11-7, 9-11, 7-11, 11-6, 11-9

Group 48

PITCHFORD Liam ENG beat NGALIM Urban CMR 12-10, 11-8, 11-7, 11-4

Group 55

REED Daniel ENG beat BIN HAYEE Bader Saleh BRN 8-11, 6-11, 12-10, 11-4, 11-9, 11-3

Womens Singles

Qualification

Group 52

HICKS Hannah ENG beat MLADENOVA Biljana MKD 11-6, 11-6, 11-5, 11-3

Mens Doubles

Preliminary

ABO YAMAN Zaid/ALDMAISY Zeyad JOR lost to KNIGHT Darius/REED Daniel ENG 8-11,4-11,6-11

Mixed Doubles

Preliminary

REED Daniel/HICKS Hannah ENG beat OLIVARES Felipe/MORALES Judith CHI 3-11,11-3,11-9,11-8

Photo: Danny Reed – he sorted out a tricky problem in his singles

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