

Jeremy Wilson talks: Britain

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Women's number 1 Jo Parker, Highest ranked Brit Andrew Baggaley and English number 1 Liam Pitchford

Against such [Chinese brilliance](#), the British players have achieved limited Olympic success and next year's tournament is likely to be something of a learning process. After their silver medal at the Commonwealth Games, the men's team event would appear to represent the best chance.

In the World Championship of 2011, Paul Drinkhall, Andrew Baggaley and Gavin Rungay all did well to qualify for the first round proper of the tournament but were beaten by higher-ranked European opponents.

Yet arguably the most promising performance was that of Liam Pitchford, who was narrowly beaten 4-2 in first round by Japan's world number 76 Koki Niwa

In the women's singles, Kelly Parker and Joanna Parker both also reached the first round. Parker then produced an outstanding performance against another defender, Yuka Ishigaki, the world's number 29 from Japan. The match went into expedite in the third game and, after a tussle that eventually lasted 80 minutes, Parker was narrowly beaten 15-12 in the deciding seventh game. Parker had saved four match points but also held three match points of her own.

The good news for Britain is that, as hosts, they are guaranteed a place in both team events and at least one representative in each of the singles competitions. In the men's, that currently looks most likely to be Drinkhall, whose world ranking of 130 puts him 26 places clear of Baggaley.

Among the women, the automatic place will almost certainly come down to a straight contest between Sibley and Parker, who are rated 151 and 168 respectively in the world rankings.

A second player could potentially also take part in the singles, subject either to their ranking or performance in one the qualifying tournaments.

The main competition, though, is likely to be for places in the team events. Among the men, Rungay, Pitchford and Darius Knight will be pushing hard for a place alongside Drinkhall and Baggaley while Hannah Hicks and Wales' Naomi Owen are in contention to join Sibley and Parker in the women's team.

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