

Men's doubles disappointment for England

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Another tough encounter for the British players

Pitchford and Baggaley find the Chinese pairing just too much

Thirty minutes: that's all it took for Chinese superstars Ma Lin and Jike Zhang to race through their opening round of the men's doubles.

Their opponents Andrew Baggeley and Liam Pitchford, who both collected medals at the recent Commonwealth Games, made a confident enough start winning the first game 11-9. But from then on it was all very predictable. The Chinese pair moved up a gear and 16 minutes later it was all over.

It's the difference between world class and the rest and although the two Brits tried their utmost to keep in touch their opponents were light years ahead.

After that opening game which brought loud cheers from the hundreds of local school children, it became less and less noisy as Ma Lin and his partner swept their challengers aside 9-11, 11-6, 11-5, 11-7, 11-4.

"It was difficult, which we expected, of course," said Baggaley. "We found we couldn't get in as quickly as we had hoped for and I suppose they were simply too quick.

"I know the scores will look as if it was all one way, but I felt we played well and weren't outclassed."

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